'WHERE THERE IS NO VISION THE PEOPLE PERISH'

The Poetry Review

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33 PORTMAN SQUARE
LONDON W 1
Telephone: Welbeck 9393

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3 Breams Buildings
London E C 4

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TO MEMBERS AND FRIENDS: IF YOU CAN BUY THE BOOKS THAT ARE PUBLISHED BY OUR ADVERTISERS YOU WILL BE GIVING HELP ALL ROUND

TO OUR WOULD-BE CONTRIBUTORS

*

IN YOUR OWN INTEREST READ CAREFULLY –

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2. **A self-addressed stamped envelope** must always be enclosed or, if an overseas contributor, the Coupon-Response International. Otherwise, no MSS will be considered. Loose stamps cannot be regarded as a substitute. Except in rare instances an introductory letter is not necessary.
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5. Not more than four poems should be submitted at one time. Two is an ideal number.
6. Poems over thirty lines in length have a doubtful chance of acceptance.
7. If helpful editorial suggestions are made with a returned MS, please do not reply challenging the advice. Requests for criticism, moreover, are not invited. It should be remembered that The Poetry Society already has a well-organized service for expert advice, as announced in each issue.
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9. Acceptance or rejection of a MS cannot reasonably be expected until at least three months have elapsed. Inquiries by telephone cannot be dealt with.
10. The receipt of a proof does not necessarily imply immediate publication.

THESE PAGES—AN OFFERING TO

Andrew Young

And single stars I saw
Crossing themselves in awe . . .

Prelude: REVERENCE FOR LIFE

Far across the ocean, in a remote valley in Haiti, an American rancher and his wife have established at their own expense a hospital which is mainly devoted to sick children and tubercular patients, of whom there are deplorably many in the Caribbeans. Last year, drawn from the primitive conditions of life and labour on the island, six thousand patients were treated by a staff of resident doctors and nurses from the United States.

Pour tout ce qui vit: révérence. This is the simple inscription over the principal doorway of the hospital, and it explains why the founders have spent two million dollars on an institution hundreds of miles from anywhere. They read a book about the heroic Albert Schweitzer and his dedicated work in tropical Africa, and that was enough. They realized that Schweitzer's doctrine, 'reverence for life', is fundamental. Without it all else is vain, even if that life exists in a half-starved, disease-racked piccaninny.

*

'Reverence for life' is a principle on which The Poetry Society has based its work these many years. To share Schweitzer's vision requires imagination and faith, essential in all the arts, and it was about the lack of these among certain poets outside our organization that Dame Edith Sitwell might have been speaking when in this year's Hermon Ould memorial lecture she defined the many uses of poetry:

> 'It is the deification of reality. It should make all our days holy to us. The poet should speak to all men, for a moment, of that other life of theirs that they have smothered and forgotten.'

Imagination and faith were the outstanding characteristics of Gilbert Murray, whose death at the age of ninety-one The Poetry Society is now mourning. He was one of our vice-presidents and a covenanter, the January–March number last year being 'dedicated' to him. Those characteristics are implicit in the Poet Laureate's lines, printed in *The Times*, 'On the Death of Professor Gilbert Murray, Scholar and Humanist':

> Surely, in some great quietude afar,
> Above man's madness and the greed of night,
> Wisdom will crown this spirit with her star
> In conquerors' peace, in her undying light.

No need to say here that Robert Frost, happily still alive and well, has also possessed imagination and faith! Mr. Frost was in London from America

until a few days ago, and during his stay The Poetry Society had the privilege of welcoming him at 33 Portman Square, where he gave a lecture and reading from his own poetry.

This was an unforgettable occasion, and we are indebted to the U.S. Embassy for choosing The Poetry Society of many which had expressed the wish to be hosts to a poet revered on both sides of the Atlantic. That his own country should have organized a poet's visit has done much to restore the confidence which had been sadly affected over here by the official attitude to two other greatly-revered artists, Charles Chaplin and Paul Robeson.

*

'Roy Campbell's name will always be associated with The Poetry Society.' So wrote our President in an obituary, also printed in *The Times* (1st May), and he continued:

'He was a close friend and co-worker for many years, and a member of our general council until he went to Portugal to run a farm. He often read his work to our Friday audiences, and contributed poems and characteristically powerful articles to *The Poetry Review*. By a coincidence one of his recently-written poems was being prepared for a forthcoming number of this quarterly when the tragic news came through.

'Roy Campbell and I were friends for thirty years, and he will be remembered by friends and enemies alike as the most forthright and invigorating of all the present-day poets. As a personality he was the most picturesque. He was not only a bullfighter in Spain at one time. He won a silver picador's jacket twice, and a steer-throwing contest in Provençe. His visits to London were frequent. Chelsea, for example, knew this vital, volcanic man of thought and action as vividly as he was known in, say, Madrid. His poems in English, and his translations from the Spanish, made a lasting mark.'

*

Kennedy Williamson, of the Editorial Board, will be the presiding Tutor during a course of five sessions on 'Modern Poetry' at Pendley Manor (Residential Centre of Adult Education), Tring, Herts., from 5 p.m., Saturday, 12th October, to Sunday, 13th October, last session 5 p.m. Full details from Miss Margaretta Bennett at Pendley Manor.

*

Postscripts. – The Rev. Pratt Green's colleagues on the General Council will have said a regretful farewell to him before the next *Poetry Review* appears. He has accepted a new appointment in York: but we are glad to say that he will continue his valuable work on our Editorial Board . . . A poem by Margaret Stanley-Wrench, lasting forty-five minutes, was read on the B.B.C. Third Programme and repeated the same week . . . In the presence of the artist, A. R. Kendall's portrait of her Father was unveiled at the Royal Society of Edinburgh . . . The poem, 'Daffodil-Month' in this number is written as a tribute to Miss Helen Darbishire, the leading authority on Wordsworth. Her seventy-sixth birthday was celebrated in March by a party at which nearly a hundred of her former students at Somerville College, Oxford, made Miss Darbishire an offering of 500 daffodil bulbs which have been planted by stealth in the garden of her home at Grasmere.

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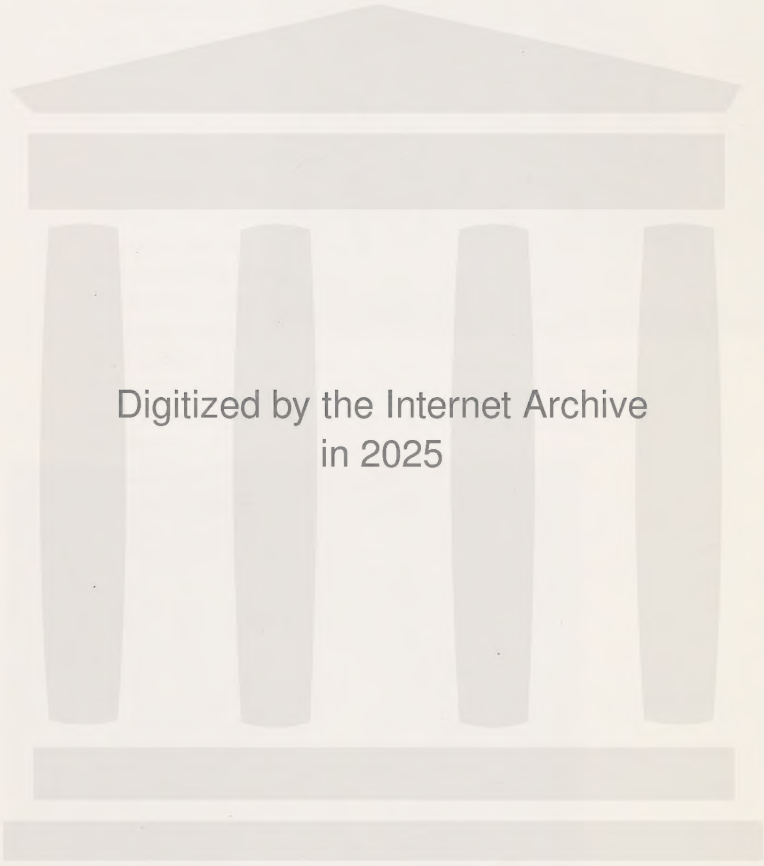
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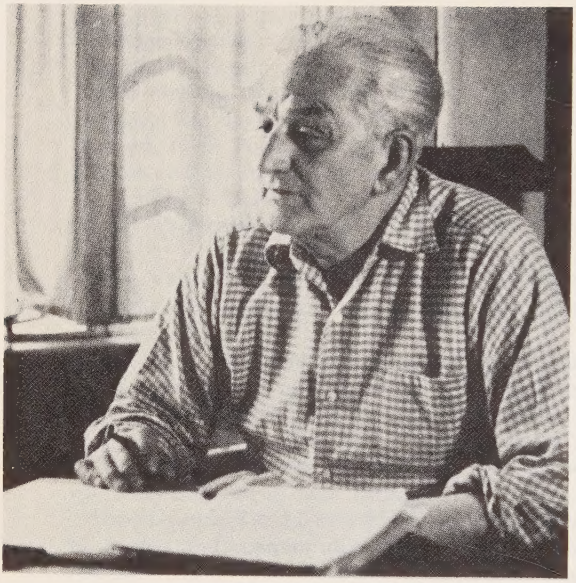

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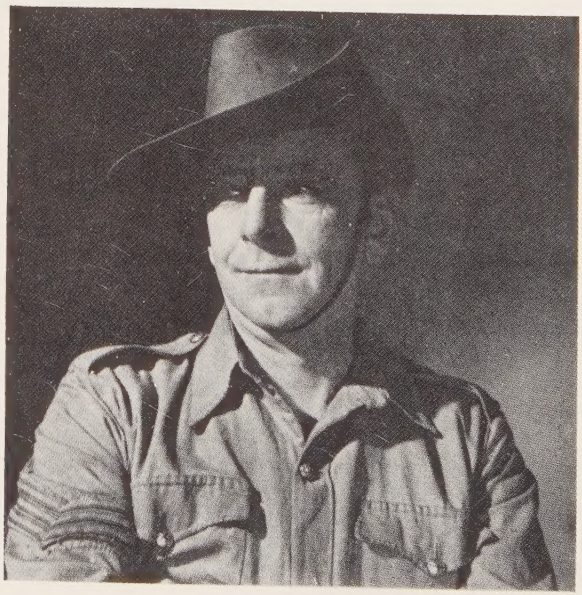

ROY
CAMPBELL

1901–1957

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN FIFTY KICKS

(TO A. F. TSCHIFFELY, 1953)

ROY CAMPBELL

If you hear of my death, do not worry two hoots:
It will mean that Existence is changing its boots.
For my lot is a football's, in pleasure or strife –
Addicted to getting a kick out of life.
The first kick I got was my grandmother's gift,
The kick of a rifle I scarcely could lift,
When the great koodoo bull saw the last of his days
And hunter and quarry were skittled both ways.
The next kick I got from the rod in my hold
As through the green water the mullet I trolled,
When the shark . . . unsuspecting his fate,
Turned up his white belly to swallow the bait:
And a thriller to hold was the shrieking bamboo
When the fighting sea-tiger had buckled it to!
The next one I felt when the plaza was full –
It was that of the lance in the hump of the bull;
But then I got one from the hoof of the Devil
And it took me a couple of years to get level,
When down went his hornpiece, and up went his tail,
As the fire-banderillas roared out on the gale!
Then the kick of a bronco that bounced like a ball
And laid me out limp in the mire of the kraal –
And the kick retrospective, the kick, the collective
Accumulate kick one gets out of it all!
For it all totalled up to the kick that is best –
The kick that one gets from enjoying a rest.

Once my scholarship won me a kick in the pants
For proving the pyramids built by white-ants:
And still I am prone to pedantic delights,
I get such a kick from historical sights! –
The Kick of my heart, like a punch in the rib,
To see the 'Ark Royal' returning to Gib
As that great swan of victory rippled the tide
With a hole in her decks and a list to the side;
To see the Alcazar, reduced to one crag,
Disdainfully waving her bullet-torn flag –
And the kick (such as maidens must dream in their beds!)
When over the Tagus we booted the Reds,

With the Crescent for Sickle, for Hammer the Cross,
And the thugs of the Kremlin behowling their loss,
As Herod made off with his smashed titty-bottles
To pass round the hat for the babies he throttles,
And the captured munitions were piled to such height
That it seemed the sierras had calved overnight!
Now the koodoo and sable may graze on their run
Since I've tired all the kicks out of life except one.
It's a two-booted kick, to whose impact aglow,
Clean over the goal-posts of glory I go,
And never come down, but sail on like a dove –
And it comes from the friends and the books that I love.
But the first is my Muse, this companion of mine:
Like de Lenclos, she knows how to age like good wine,
And the scent of her hair is the wind in the pine.
Still black as the future that looms in our way
(I love it that colour, forebode what it may)
Her hair is my night: but her face is my day.
Her silence is that of the Sibyl or Sphinx:
Like Sappho she feels, and like Sheba she thinks:
And her speech is the fountain where Pegasus drinks.
We have said to our friends, both the living and dead,
'Be with us each night while the tables are spread'
With the wealth of the Muses my bookshelves are straining
And my trestles with Bacchus as shrilly complaining,
But though with its lading my wood may be sore,
My leather is game to continue the score
And I say to my life – 'Come and kick me once more!'

*

ROY CAMPBELL'S FREE SPEECH

In literature to-day the poet depends for his contemporary fame, and perhaps his livelihood, largely on whether his work can be used to illustrate the pet theories of the uncreative majority of politico-critical pedants who really for the time being call the tune ... Commentators on verse are more interested in discussing what they call 'tendencies' than on studying the work of the poet. One crossword-conscious pedant has the effrontery to tell us that he likes his poetry 'difficult', as 'something to be wrestled with', and for every clear-headed poet, there are at least three hundred of crossword-conscious professors demanding, like this one does, to be *puzzled* by poetry which is more difficult to read than to write; poetry in which they can joyfully hunt the thimble of meaning through haystacks of self-bamboozlement; poetry which is vague and formless but offers (like Leonardo's mildewed wall) a million suggestions of half-meanings and glimmerings of sense. * * * For sheer Alexandrian pedantry and false pretence the literary claptrap of this age has no equal in our past literature. The true poet could not interest anybody in a *tendency* 'towards' anything, nor try to develop a '*tendency*' in order to attract the unburied corpses of an abortive generation such as ours has done its best to become. They say no man can fully savour and enjoy living until he has thoroughly experienced love as a lover, poverty as a poor man, and war as a soldier. That is to say the more one has enjoyed, experienced, and suffered the more zest it arouses. I should add religion to the other three volcanic fountains of power, and put it first. (*Slightly revised; The Poetry Review, April, 1949*)

ROY CAMPBELL: FLAMING TOREADOR

TONY VAN DEN BERGH

Contradiction and Roy Campbell are inseparable. Always did he struggle to be tough, to be a fighter; and often in his efforts to prove his physical toughness it must be admitted he played the bully. One of his most common claims – not to be taken seriously, of course – was that any man can become a poet but few poets become men! Whenever he met disagreement he fought, and with any person or any idea for which he had contempt, he would be as ruthless as a steam-roller. Some of his finest verse sprang from anger rather than from love. Yet he never lost his very real sensitivity; his feeling for beauty and sincerity was profound.

Undoubtedly the greatest poet produced by South Africa, Roy Campbell was from the start in combat with the literary authorities of his time. Especially did he cross swords with the self-elected Professor Drennan, who criticized Campbell for both his lack of academic achievement and his failure to believe his inspiration was God-given. Campbell replied:

> Who forced the Muse to this alliance?
> A Man of more degrees than parts –
> The jilted Bachelor of Science
> And Widower of Arts.

Roy Campbell's early days were spent in learning to know and to love the wild life of South Africa. He and his brothers were all first-class rugby players, hunters and sportsmen. At the age of fifteen Roy enlisted in the Army, hoping to find in the trenches of France the excitement his adventurous spirit demanded. But his pretence of being eighteen was frustrated by his boyish countenance and he was firmly returned to his family.

At school and at home his great facility with words and his natural ability for verse were appreciated. His father, a noted doctor, anxious that such talent should not be wasted, sent him to Oxford University. In England he came in close contact with the Sitwells and also founded deep and lasting friendships with Augustus John and Wyndham Lewis, both of whom he held in great respect as well as affection.

Campbell's *bêtes noires* were pseudo-intellectualism and preciousness; the long-haired left-wing poet was an anathema to him. Much of the poetry of the 'thirties he thought frankly repugnant and he attacked all that was unpalatable to him in his satirical epic, *The Georgiad.*

Sir John Squire, the eminent writer and critic, came in for some rough handling:

> Even Jack Squire, forlornest of the undone,
> Who weeps for rivers half-an-hour from London,
> Who weeps for fishes that he cannot catch
> And makes a funeral of a Rugby Match.
> Though quite respectable as you and I are
> Comes here quite often (or I am a liar),
> Though not in person, yet in soul – on fire
> To puff, to praise, to flatter and admire.

This onslaught failed to offend Squire, for he not only retained a warm admiration for Campbell's works, but, indeed, he defended him against the snapping of lesser men.

Campbell, having fled Oxford, sought adventure and in turn became sailor, mule-salesman and bullfighter. He also competed, representing South Africa, in the rodeo at the White City, London. But his great sporting love was the bull-ring, and not unnaturally Spain became his second home.

The literature of Spain he found vivid and passionate, and his translations of Lorca are the finest in existence. In the years that followed the Spanish Revolution, Campbell would vociferously claim with a half-grin that he was the only person in the position to know the truth as he had fought on both sides twice! During this tragic fratricidal strife he became converted to Roman Catholicism, which finally hardened his allegiance to General Franco. It was Campbell's bravery in the Siege of Toledo that saved the famous Carmelite Archives. He had little use for the left-wing intellectuals who he considered had followed the international forces from comfortable safety while urging those at home to support the Communist cause. In everything he was robust, but unfortunately inclined to fall back on the physical attack when baulked of an intellectual duel. This contempt for those whom he considered to have avoided the firing line during the Second World War was summed up in a pet expression 'The knife and fork brigade'.

There was much of the boy in Roy Campbell, and yet he was a poet of deep sensitivity with an extensive knowledge and appreciation of the classics, and the ability to produce shimmering lines of beauty. His descriptive powers were immense, and he has left us some wonderful pictures of Nature:

> The City of Giraffes! – a People
> Who live between the earth and skies,
> Each in his lone religious steeple,
> Keeping a light-house with his eyes:

Each his own stairway, tower, and stylite,
Ascending on his saintly way
Up rungs of gold into the twilight
And leafy ladders to the day . . .

His descriptive power was vivid in 'Zulu Girl':

When in the sun the hot red acres smoulder,
Down where the sweating gang its labour plies,
A girl flings down her hoe, and from her shoulder
Unslings her child tormented by the flies.

She takes him to a ring of shadow pooled
By thorn-trees: purpled with the blood of ticks,
While her sharp nails, in slow caresses ruled,
Prowl through his hair with sharp electric clicks,

His sleepy mouth plugged by the heavy nipple,
Tugs like a puppy, grunting as he feeds;
Through his frail nerves her own deep languors ripple
Like a broad river sighing through its reeds.

And what a magnificent line is that in 'African Moonrise' in which he looks at the moon across the lagoon: 'She fished her shadow with a line of fire'.

To-day it is the mode for the poet to ape the respectable; to appear as much like a stockbroker as possible. Campbell refused to join the herd and it was a refreshing sight to see him striding into the 'Catherine Wheel', Kensington, wearing his bull-fighter's hat, astrakhan coat and chaperejos and dangerously brandishing a knobkerrie. While with his close friends he talked the world to rest: with Rob Lyle the poet, who in later years was Roy's dearest friend and counsellor, with Charles Mulvey, A. F. Tschiffely or myself; there was always the glittering phrase. I remember one such occasion on which he described two garrulous women as 'chattering at each other like machine guns across a valley'.

Needless to say he volunteered for the Forces immediately the Second Great War broke out. He served as a ranker in North and East Africa, eventually reaching a rank of sergeant. He would describe with great relish his first encounter with that mechanized steed, the motor bicycle. 'Man,' he would say, 'the only thing I'd ever ridden was a horse, and as soon as I started this infernal machine it wrapped itself round a tree.' His instructor ordered him to wheel the damaged motor bicycle back to camp, a matter of two miles. Campbell arrived exhausted and barefooted, with his boots tied around his neck by the laces. 'You see, Man,' he explained. 'It was one hell of a job, because it wasn't until I handed the bike in that they showed me how to take it out of gear!' His delightful sense of humour always enabled him

to laugh at himself. Shortly after the war he became a B.B.C. Talks Producer. He claimed he was 'broke' at the time. Armed with an introduction from a friend and attired in a blue serge suit, bowler hat and medals, he applied to the B.B.C. for the job of commissionaire, only to find himself with a private office and a secretary.

Though he might be ruthless with those he disliked he had a profound capacity for friendship. At the same time he would not allow his friends to become pompous or self-satisfied. One evening I had been talking fulsomely about one of my short stories recently broadcast. Roy waited until I paused for breath, then cut me down to size, with, 'Don't worry, Tony, I will go on producing your short stories . . . After all, friendship means more than art!'

There was no selfishness in Campbell. He would enthuse over the works of other poets. Especially did he admire Dylan Thomas, whom he considered to be the greatest poet of our day. Another for whom he expressed admiration was T. S. Eliot, about whom he said: 'Not only is he a fine man of letters, but he will lend you a quid when you are broke.' For Rob Lyle he predicted a future in which the reading world would realize that here was another poet of considerable stature.

In 1922 he married Mary Margaret Garman, one of the most beautiful women of her day, by whom he had two daughters, Anna and Tessa. For all who love poetry it was a tragedy when Roy was killed in a car crash in Portugal on 23rd April this year. For his friends it has meant an unbelievable sense of shock. How can such an alive and vital person as Campbell be dead? . . .

When his friends meet it will never be an occasion for sorrow, but the opportunity for exhilarating recollection of arguments, excitements, disputes, friendships and uproarious evenings. It is only alone that one may allow oneself the luxury of sorrowing over the fact that no more will his pen beguile us with words of beauty or dramatic power; and no more shall we laugh over the latest satirical comment of Campbell on one of his rivals.

ROY CAMPBELL AND THE COMET APRIL 1957

MURIEL AGNES ARBER

This ball of silver fire with mist-white tail
Streams on its way across the ordered stars
To fade beyond our vision. Thus he passed
In blaze of phoenicopters, stallions, bulls,
Seared into words by passion's incandescence.
Heart leading head through geometric space,
White-hot among the coldest constellations,
His spirit shoots beyond the firmament
Leaving its trail blazoned on printed page.

WHEN I HAVE FEARS

A. E. COPPARD

I'll live to see ye decorate your prime,
My little children twain, my pigeon pair;
Though scarcely further will the sway of time
Permit my feet to wander with you there –
I an old gaffer reckoning each chime
As though it were a vesper, you so fair.
How will men see you then and I not see?
How will they deem you?

As eye-delighting as I find you now?
As full of joy? As passionate as bees
Battling with flowers? Rippling with the ease
Of wavelets in the wind? Or will a slough
Of blossomless time engulf you? Tell me how,
Immortal longings, I may succour these!
O, little sweetings, whereto were ye born?
How can I save you?

RETURN TO THE VILLAGE

BETTY PARVIN

The trees stand firm that seemed so frail
When this old village was my gaol;
Quickthorns a live arc reach and bend
Where gravel-plundered lakes extend.
Ring-dove and tern hold revel there
More freely on the unchecked air
And richer, riper meadows run
With Trent upflowing to the sun.

Yet – steeple that impaled a star,
I span you! Walls are now less far
Above me and amazed I see
How close my freedom was to me.
This road whose race I thought was run,
Its enterprise was but begun;
This stone-browed house where fear was king,
How insignificant a thing!

WATER-LILIES

WILFRID GIBSON

Through long brown stalks of sap-rich pliancy
Drawing the ichor of vitality
From rich black ooze, the lilies, one by one,
Uplift their shallow cups of lucent white,
Chalices of essential purity
Exalted from dense darkness, so the sun
May fill them with the crystal wine of light –
Thus, from blind chaos and primeval slime
The dreams of man emerge; and, for a time
Blossom in beauty, frail and fugitive:
Yet, though like lilies they must fade and die,
They, too, immortal in remembrance, live.

ELFRIEDA IN HIDING

PHOEBE HESKETH

Where can she be –
Elfrieda with the flaxen hair,
Hedge-rose child of English lanes
And elfin of the school?

Robin, call her, make her hear
Your grass-blade cuckoo call!
We cannot catch her for she moves
Moss-footed through the dappled wood,
Elusive as a deer.

Listen through the leaves – no sound
Of cracking twig or laughter comes;
She is not anywhere;
No other creature of the ground
Can tread upon the air.

No trampled fern or trodden flower
Betrays the way she goes.
And yet her self is everywhere,
In bramble-hoop and tangled briar,
In meadow-sweet and rose.

But watch the bracken on the bank,
How stealthily it moves
With cunning wiser than the wind's
As though a fox hid there,
And see a scarlet butterfly
Upon the trembling fronds –
Elfrieda, we have found you by
The ribbon on your hair!

CATHEDRALS

MAURICE TASNIER

Perfection of living bones
Stripped of the furnishings of flesh,
Pointing and pale or curved and dark,
Throbbing stone to pulsing sky,
Attuned to musing clouds, a shaft
Of hope aligned to the living eye;

A patient and fluent tongue
Rising from earth in stone made soft
By the astute and tempered hands
Of men whose lonely human breath
Contained a dream of beauty, frail
But unafraid of the drums of death.

JOURNEY'S END

BERESFORD RICHARDS

One by one they slip away
Thinning the group. And some will go
So quietly you'd hardly know
One less was here to-day.

And others when they leave will make
A small commotion: pebble thrown
On waters, or a light air blown
In ripples on a lake.

But one must find himself the last.
He is the lonely one: regret
Can't follow him, nor any fret,
For all of these have passed.

A GAY GARDEN: THE VERSE OF HUGH MACKINTOSH

RICHARD USBORNE

The man of whose Muse this article is supposed to be a critical assessment is a friend of mine. That makes things difficult. But he writes just the sort of verse that I try to write myself. That makes things a little easier, because I know just what he is up to. On the other hand I am covetous of much that Hugh Mackintosh possesses, and that makes things difficult again. One should keep envy out of critical assessments, just as one should keep friendships out. But I covet Mackintosh's skill with rhyme and metre, and his energy in working so many good refrains up into so many publishable ballades. The garden of his verses is small, tidy and well-tended. Its main beds are for ballades, villanelles and sonnets. I envy him their colour and variety. It is, on the whole, a gay garden.*

I envy Mackintosh his ability to be urbanely gay in verse in four or five languages. I mean, his easier-than-Eliot, less-pedantic-than-Pound darts into Latin, French, Italian and Spanish (or is it Portuguese?). I envy Mackintosh for the central core of his poetic being . . . his having been a friend of Hilaire Belloc. I envy Mackintosh his job. (I don't know quite what it is, but it seems to be polyglottal, to require several secretaries and much travel, and to be based in the heart of Clubland.) But I have never asked questions about this, because I like to suppose that Mackintosh is something secretly tycoon-size in gimble-switches, war-heads or Scotch Whisky substitute.

I covet Mackintosh's Jaguar. I envy him his tailor, his knowledge of food and wine, his eupepsia and his air of living on the income from his income. If I am alive when it appears (doubtful), I shall read *The Life and Letters of Hugh Mackintosh* with considerable interest, so that the facts of his life may be revealed, and other letters than those to me may perhaps reveal the man himself more fully. What letters I have had from him seemed always to have been dictated in embryo to a good secretary, and then worked up to the statutory 250 words by her and signed sight-unseen by the boss. What, I ask myself, is the secret of it all? How come that this elegant boulevardier has had three volumes of verse published before reaching the age of eighty? It is against that background that I propose briefly and enviously to study the Output.**

* *Ballades and Other Verse* (*1953*) and *Rhyme and Reason* (*1956*). (Rupert Hart-Davis, each 10s. 6d.).

** By 'the Output' I mean the published and printed verse. Technically Mackintosh could be had up for 'publishing' several *bijoux* in verse which his friends, and the friends of his victims, keep on folded sheets of paper in their pocket-books. But no more of that . . .

Round about the time of Hilaire Belloc's eightieth birthday, there was a big tea party at King's Land, and many of those who couldn't come (e.g. Bernard Shaw and Hugh Mackintosh) sent telegrams. These were pinned for the occasion on a board on the terrace of the house. The one from Mackintosh went to three Post Offices pages, and was a sonnet, decipherable, once you had got the rhythm going, even through the pasted-up Post Office pagination and typography. It is of the company of Belloc's friends and disciples that Mackintosh is happiest to have been and to talk. One of the verselets in *Rhyme and Reason* is an 'Envoi' dedication (of *Ballades and Verse*) to A. P. Herbert:

> High Prince, poetical, political, prophetical,
> Deign to receive these ballades which aspire
> To emulate, in order alphabetical,
> Baring and Belloc, Chesterton and Squire.

And there, albeit too modestly and with a first line that I cannot scan, Mackintosh sums it up. He is the most polished and persistent practitioner of the ballade in English to-day, and there are more than fifty of his ballades in these two books. One of them is a double ballade. Here are a few of his refrains: 'England was leading at the Close of Play': 'All my life I have loved the song and the dance': 'I badly need a double Dry Martini': 'Bring me a bottle of Beaune': 'We sing a great deal better when we're drinking': 'Where do they finish when they start so young?': 'But Mr. Belloc says the food is bad': 'Give me the girls of Liége': 'He has been duped . . . the station-master!': 'I hope that you will fall and break your neck': 'Pleurez donc! - Pleurer! Il y a de quoi!': 'The Pharisees were really decent chaps': 'And so we lose the Holiest in the Height'.

Of his sonnets I can only say (since I know so well the provenance of such verse, and I envy Mackintosh's felicity again) that, though all would have pleased, and many certainly did please, his exemplar, Belloc, a handful curette the gatherings of quite private meditations, ask no acknowledgement, are not the prize poem nor the *vers d'occasion*, and are shot with poetry. Belloc would not even call his own work poetry. It was verse. And Mackintosh would use the same vocabulary. But I, using the words more usually and less exactingly, would say that, in Mackintosh's sonnets particularly, poetry keeps breaking in.

Let me give a few first-and-last-lines of his sonnets. 'The fine-wrought scabbard of Excalibur/The true Achaean Helen has returned!': 'O see the gentle beauty of our land!/You shall be Daphne: where is your Apollo?': 'I saw the clouds at evening, full of peace/ And ruin not befall the reckless heart': 'I saw your death reported in *The Times*/We loved each other all one London Season'. But the first-and-last-lines of sonnets, like the refrains of ballades, are the

ones that come first, and there are many, many other lines needed to back them and justify them. It is the second stanza of a ballade that generally shows the strain, in rhyme and sense. It is between the sixth and the tenth lines that a sonnet shows its limp muscles if its muscles are limp. I envy Mackintosh the cool strainlessness of his ballades, and the firm muscles of his sonnets.

I shall quote neither ballade nor sonnet here. But this piece, 'Dorset Lament', shall stand as a shorter example. (Be it said that the place-names are not inventions in the manner of Dornford Yates. The villages of Folly and Plush exist, and the inn sale occurred. And Mackintosh and others lamented: but he in pleasant verse):

> The inn at Folly is for sale,
> All shuttered-up and broken down,
> Mourned only by the upland gale
> Whereunder the bleak cross-roads crown
> The fall of land between the hills:
> For no one now will walk from Plush
> And no one sings, and nothing fills
> The silence, but the lark and thrush.

At the end of *Rhyme and Reason* Mackintosh has a short section called *Two Minutes with the Poets*. He gives us 'The Busy Man's "Excelsior"', 'The Busy Man's "Ancient Mariner"', 'The Busy Man's "Horatius"', and 'The Busy Man's "Omar"'. This may conceivably be the beginning of something very valuable as well as extremely enjoyable. For instance:

> Thirst, heat and cold, dead men and ghosts beset the luckless ship
> And every kind of contretemps combined to spoil the trip.
> How he got home he can't recall (on foot? by boat? by carriage?)
> The Wedding-Guest who heard all this was stunned and missed the marriage.

Yeats, summing up Gogarty, called him 'one of the swift, indifferent men'. Hugh Mackintosh is content to be less; but he earns my envy still, on its lower level, much as Gogarty earned Yeats's. He is one of the few of the cricketing-drinking-singing group of Georgians who do not wake to a bad head in Elizabethan times. He is a much better and more frequent poet than he believes. And, if I am right, and he really is a man of vast and profitable affairs, I hope his tycoon rivals are baffled, bewildered and bamboozled in several languages by this business-man with rhymes and rhythms under his Lock hat, this scholar-dreamer in a Savile Row suit and a Jaguar.

*

Editorial Apology. – Unexpected demands on our space have caused the postponement of articles by Herbert Palmer and Stanton Coblentz, announced in the April-June issue.

FLOWERING MAY

GILBERT THOMAS

In tone with sombre headlines
  Are words unwittingly
Two-edged! 'We must have open eyes;
  Blink no reality.'

Come, then! Step to the window.
  See how the morning light
Catches, above the dappled grass,
  Clusters of pink and white

So delicately dreamlike
  That they could well bemuse
The mind. Look firmly! Here is fact:
  Here, also, latest news.

THE LOST LAND

JAMES BENTLEY

Sometimes I drift on the ebb tide of sleep
Past forests of marble where stone angels weep
And silent drums beat a ceaseless retreat,
Past gardens of crosses aslant and decay,
And the villa at Mayoub where Anthony lay.
    The trumpets are dumb;
    The day is late.
Is that Sandra at the garden gate?
    The windless flag can flutter no more,
    The shadow of silence fills my door.

Sometimes I am hurled upon that wild shore
High up, where the fierce cold fires of fever roar,
Then, down the deep catacombs of despair
Into that lost land, by whose western wall
The restless Brompton trains await the signal's fall.
    The trumpets are dumb;
    The day is late.
Is that David at the garden gate?
    The windless flag can flutter no more,
    The bugle lies on the nursery floor.

'FIRE' AND 'HIGHER' – ONE SYLLABLE OR TWO?

CLIVE SANSOM, MARGARET RAWLINGS, WILTON COLE, SIR PATRICK LAIRD, IMOGEN WHYSE, RUTH DUFFIN, AND REV. W. H. HAMILTON

When Clive Sansom wrote from Tasmania with all the authority of an English prize-winning poet that 'fire' and 'higher' were legitimate rhymes we answered his printed letter (January–March, 1957) by adding a brisk footnote: '*Fire,* one syllable, *higher,* two syllables.' That started something, as the saying is; Phoebe Hesketh, Ambrose Agius, O.S.B., and Margaret Arnott wrote in, and we now publish a few more of the letters of approval or protest which have been coming into our editorial hands ever since. The following are from London, Wendover (Bucks), Tasmania, Sydney (Australia), Hertfordshire, Belfast and Aberdeenshire. How the voting goes in this controversy, 'One Syllable or Two?' must be decided by readers for themselves.

MARGARET RAWLINGS

Margaret Arnott writes that *flour* and *flower,* and *pure* and *fewer* are true rhymes. This makes nonsense of all I have taught and practised all my life. Where there is a 'w' the lips close and part; where there is not they do not. What kind of ear can it be which cannot hear the difference?

WILTON COLE, F.R.A.M.

May I air my own views as regards the pronunciation of *fire* and *higher,* etc? *Fire* is a one-syllable word – a triphthong – i.e., three vowel sounds blended into one vocal impulse. *Higher* (more high) is a two-syllable word, *high* a diphthong (two vowel sounds blended into one vocal impulse, followed by a monophthong – *er,* the whole word consisting of two vocal impulses, i.e., two syllables. Dom Ambrose Agius's quotation from *Macbeth* is merely an example of the substitution of a monosyllable for the basic trochee; while the quotation from *Julius Caesar* is an example of a line of five iambic feet, the last foot being 'bears fire'. The same applies to the lines of Blake, the first foot of each line being an inverted foot – a trochee: 'Bring me/ my char/iot/ of fire,' basically a line of four iambs.

I fully agree with Miss Hesketh that 'power' should not be pronounced 'par'; but the alternative is not to make two syllables of it: 'power' and 'flower' are triphthongs, as I have explained above in the case of 'fire'. 'Moor' is a murmur diphthong. I am afraid that when Miss Hesketh writes 'more' she really means 'maw'. 'More' is another example of a murmur diphthong, though not, of course, the same make-up as 'moor'.

I could say a lot more, but this letter is already too long. But I should be delighted to discuss these points further with anybody interested.

SIR PATRICK LAIRD

I do not think that the two-syllable champions can find anywhere in English poetry a case where any of these words *occupies both parts of a pentametric foot.* Ambrose Agius's examples certainly do not prove his point, because

in each of them the metre would allow of the word 'fire' being read as either one or two syllables. But nobody on earth could read the word as two syllables in, for example, the following:

'Fire' answers fire, and through their paly flames' (Shakespeare).

'A little fire is quickly trodden out.' (Shakespeare).

'The fire-fly wakens – waken thou with me' (Tennyson).

It is only poetic licence that allows 'fire' to rhyme with 'higher', or 'flower' with 'hour', and the reason why poetic licence allows it in these cases but would not for example extend to rhyming 'mine' with 'lion' is simply that the English, unlike the French and the Scots, don't quite know what to do about the letter 'r'.

They leave it out whenever they can (even to a B.B.C. announcer 'there'll' may become 'they'll' and 'temporary' becomes 'tempery') and then try to compensate by putting it in where it doesn't exist, the extreme example being found in the 'drawring' office! (For some unknown reason they only do this after the vowel sounds 'a' and 'aw': nobody talks of 'goring' places).

While sympathizing to some extent with Phoebe Hesketh, I must say that 'mooahs' as a rendering of 'moors' would drive me almost as mad as 'mores' (pronounced 'maws') does her!

CLIVE SANSOM

I could quote several instances where established poets have rhymed these two words. I will content myself with two. The first is from Tennyson's 'In Memoriam':

> The wild unrest that lives in woe
> Would dote and pore on yonder cloud
> That rises upward always higher,
> And onward drags a labouring breast,
> And topples round the dreary west,
> A looming bastion fringed with fire.

The other is from Shelley's 'Ode to a Skylark':

> Higher still and higher
> From the earth thou springest
> Like a cloud of fire . . .

I suggest that what Tennyson and Shelley considered to be a legitimate rhyme should satisfy your rather exacting reviewer.

RUTH DUFFIN

I agree with your rejoinder to Clive Sansom that 'fire' is a monosyllable, though by poetic licence it *might* be lengthened into two syllables. The instances given by Ambrose Agius do not seem to me to prove anything; I personally would read 'fire' in them all as a monosyllable, slightly more drawn out than the 'i' in 'fight', for instance, but certainly not fi-er.

As an Irishwoman, I agree with Phoebe Hesketh, and most emphatically disagree with Margaret Arnott that the sound of what she calls 'triphthongs' in 'fire' and 'higher' are identical. To pronounce 'higher', 'fewer', and 'flower' as monosyllables, seems to me to be slipshod to the last degree. This debasement of pronunciation is increasing, and not only in such instances

as these. I once saw a poem in 'Punch' (*not*, I hasten to add, in Owen Seaman's time!) in which 'dial' and 'fail' were supposed to rhyme!

The intrusive 'r' is almost universal now, but still strikes Irish, and I suspect Scottish, listeners as a debasement of the English language, due to laziness. One hears on the air 'Asiar and Africar', and such-like abominations.

To which, no doubt, your English readers will reply, perhaps with reason, 'Do we not know our own language better than these Celts?'

W. H. HAMILTON

Nearly forty years ago, in my youthfully immature and well-forgotten book on Masefield's work, I had the temerity to write:

> It is not necessarily a flaw that Mr. Masefield invariably gives that royal word 'fire' the value of a disyllable, but what is to be said of the metrical grace of a pentameter line like 'a rotten liar who inspires lies?' And even allowing for the stress theory whereby much loveliness of music and colour has in our day been liberated from bondage, it is difficult to pass such instances as 'After triumphant hours quickening hearts . . . A resonant wire-hum from every rope . . . Two hours passed, then a dim lightening came . . .'

I am still astounded by the consensus of opinion among your correspondents in our April-June issue that 'fire' and similar words actually have two syllables, though agreeing with one that ear rather than eye is the poet's better guide. How can either writer or reader allow extension of the dictum to all words of similar shape and sound – 'bare', 'door', 'before', 'here' and 'hear' and the total host?

It may be that the English 'ear' and the Scottish are differently constituted, but surely your rejoinder to Clive Sansom (*Fire*, one syllable) can't be so dogmatically controverted. Even two of Father Ambrose's three quotations seem to me to support *your* verdict rather than his. Complete extension of the principle would surely make a sad confusion in all speech and very arbitrarily?

IMOGEN WHYSE

Having always pronounced *fire* with two syllables fir-e, using the 'e' acute, I was astonished at the dictum that it has only one syllable. Daniel Jones does not even give the alternative – far – which I know is used by a certain group of English people. The Editor has no backing whatsoever for his dictum – none that I can find anywhere, except that usage among a few who do pronounce it – far – and which has always seemed to my ears a *mis*pronounciation. Here in Australia it is always fir-e, therefore, when an Australian uses the word he *can* rhyme it with 'higher'. Ah, these barriers of language! Still, I should like to know where the authority came from for the – far – one syllable, in reply to Mr. Clive Sansom's enquiry.

FRIDAY EVENINGS AT PORTMAN SQUARE

'The Battle for Beauty is Never Finally Won'

Leaflets will be distributed shortly with a list of Programmes, arranged by the Readings Committee, for Friday evenings, 6-30 to 7-30 approx., during the autumn at 33 Portman Square – 'Everybody Welcome'. Admission 1s. Non-members 2s. Reserved Seats 2s. 6d.

ONE

A. G. MCL. PEARCE HIGGINS

Think you, because the patina of time
  Has laid its beauty on the Trojan war;
Because the mightiest master of all rhyme
  Made magic music from the battle-roar,
Dead Trojans were less dead than Germans slain?
  Or the Greek widow less a widow than
An English woman husbandless? That pain
  Was pleasure to the old Homeric man?
Arrow and dagger, javelin, sword and spear
  Can slay as surely as the bomb and gun.
One through all ages is the widow's tear,
  One all injustice known beneath the sun,
One the world's shame of war's engulfing foam,
One the world's grief for him who comes not home.

FOR A SOUTH AFRICAN POET

J. J. CURLE

You scorned the snaffle and the curb all right
  When worthless hands applied them,
But touched by noble spurs took wing for flight
  Above all hollow men who could deride them.

SEA FLOWERS

EVELYN D. BANGAY

We carry flowers down the funeral way
To you who hardly heeded them before.
Yours were the flowers breaking round the bay,
Green-stemmed and snowy, climbing up the shore;
Clover-like patches where the wrack showed through,
And star-point daisies carpeting the sea
All faceted with diamonds of no dew.
These were the things you used to show to me,
With high deciduous foliage of sails,
And twiggy branches of a corded mast
Leaf-stripped and roaring under winter gales;
And violets by rocking shipping cast.

You do not need our flowers, but I know
You loved the hand that sets them here to blow.

ESCAPE

B. R. GIBBS

You ride your well-groomed horse over the high
banks, very neat in your hard hat,
in your man-tailored cloth that demands a sky
price beyond dream of mine. Everything that

you say or do is perfection of its kind
and he, your lover, sensing this is so,
is cowed a little, lessened in his own mind.
Where all the gipsy-hearted love to go

I ride my candy-painted wooden mount,
my cap bright paper, while the seething Fair
rushes around so fast I cannot count
coconut-shy and hoop-la. Noise and glare

zig-zag their garishness on my design,
while yours is symmetry of page and cover.
You guide your chosen horse, I cling to mine
and on its rainbow twin I find your lover.

CYPRUS KHAN

CHRISTOPHER THACKER

Here in the courtyard camels stand,
Now as they stood two thousand years ago,
Resting unharnessed after their journey,
Munching with broad jaws the evening's food.
Night scurries round them, in and out the arches,
Hiding the crumbling stone, the crowded hovels in the wall,
So that the courtyard seems no more than a stable,
With the smell of dung, of horses and oxen.

Crusaders made it a splendid place,
New arches replacing those that were old,
Fallen and crumbling a thousand years,
Dung swept away, and white pavings laid down,
Bright shields spaced round the courtyard,
Now alive with armour and war-horses.

These warriors have gone, with them their painted shields,
Their banners, their armour and war-horses,
With all gay trappings of their fairytale quest.

Only the courtyard remains, dirty, decrepit,
Much as, in the beginning, it must have seemed,
A travellers' rest-without-comfort.

It was here, men believe, that Christ was born,
Lying quiet beside Mary in untidy straw,
Within this khan, with its crumbled stone,
The same families, horses and oxen, the dung,
And, out in the courtyard, camels standing,
Unharnessed and resting after a journey.
Then, princes had ridden them, coming by night,
By night kneeling their adoration.
Two thousand years, and as many times,
These camels came here to their journey's end,
Waiting in darkness, beside a stable.

REFLECTION

STEPHANIE BOYD

Reality is not the blinding light
Some have confused with truth against their will,
But goose-grey skies and autumn funeral-pyres
For all departed summer leaves and loves;
Tom cats and hurdy-gurdies out of tune
And days that weep aloud distractedly
Around a shuttered house, proof against tears.
Even in spring, the truth's as bare as trees:
Cold and awake, the lonely fake response
In lonely violence; drums mock serenades
While children die and heroes cry for arms.
And April fools prove fools on any day
With small hopes shooting wildly toward the sun.
Sounding through space, the world's a hollow note
Hung like a round and empty semibreve
Below the descant quavers of the stars.
All life is resinous with sentiment
From those first bars. Now vinegar monsoons
Must rinse the mind of soft perplexity
And carry south the heart to freeze in peace
With still Antarctica. Tough, even there,
The sudden ways of angels may make night
More luminous than any glassy sea,
Convincing eye and mind that truth indeed
Reflects some certain wonder with such light.

VOICE AND VERSE

MARJORIE FFRANGCON-DAVIES

II

We are now approaching the stage where we come face to face with what might be termed our greatest foe and our greatest friend, namely ourself. For it is after all in ourselves that we can do much for better or worse. We can either be true to ourselves or mistakenly copy someone else in the notion that what we individually feel is of small importance. Nothing is further from the truth. True, we may be stimulated by others, our reactions may be influenced, but that stimulation is going on in our awareness individually. Coupled with our instinctive love of poetry, our own reaching out for widening horizons, embracing beauty and grandeur, we are continually aware in ourselves of stirrings and reactions. These stirrings are not to be ignored, for they are important evidence of useful faculties. Gradually, however, these urges, instinctive and impulsive, are merged through growth in observation into a knowledge of basic principles in all art: to control, to balance, to order – rhythm – all of which, when expressed, are capable of enlargement at any point as occasion demands.

Once a student has approximated as nearly as possible the contents of an artistic situation in a poem, character, or song it is important that he should step out of the picture and survey the scene objectively. This enables him to be certain that no reflex action of emotionalism or exaltation, identifying itself with his personal feelings, should rob him of his energy and decision to serve his poet, author, or composer by imparting with all the power at his command what he has grasped.

The use of the intellect and the imagination, the focusing of thought, is helpful to us in achieving control of our bodies. If in studying, or preparing for a reading, we will think deeply and quietly about the lines we are to read, we shall certainly minimize any tendency to cramped or stilted pronunciation. Vocal quality is improved through beautiful thought, and stilted pronunciation begins to fade as our thinking becomes freer. There are of course many and varied opinions on what sort of tone is right.

'The tone of voice which best expresses the dominating principle in men's lives, the supreme emotion or passion which is their chief characteristic, is the tone which they will pronounce true. Some people are gentle, some forceful, some sensuous, some intellectual. Again, one person is of narrow vision, another broadly sympathetic; one is small-minded, another generous; one a pretentious poseur,

another a lover of things as they are, who seeks for bedrock truth. Diversity of opinion in regard to tone-quality indicates this diversity of character. It obtains until the actor, singer, or reader of genius, sweeps all away by the whirlwind of his power and awakens the elemental greatness which belongs to humanity, in virtue of the rock whence it is hewn.' In a degree I think this is illustrated in the distinctly individual achievement of the late and deeply lamented Kathleen Ferrier.

Broadly speaking, tone is indissolubly allied to speech, and speech is used for the communication of thoughts. The character of the word, not of the tone as such, is the primary concern, and the student's aim should always be to speak a word rather than to make a tone. 'Fine pronunciation is the result of mental and bodily discipline. Fine tone is its inseparable companion – for elocution and fine tone are simultaneous studies.

'But what constitutes pronunciation? It is not the mere physical act of forming the vowels and consonants that go to make the word; rather is it the saying of the unified mental thing, which comes into vocal existence when the vowels and consonants, the verbal representatives of that thing, are uttered. The student first thinks the word clearly, and listens with his inner ear, when the mind has sounded it, and then he says it calmly with his voice. This is the finest singing lesson anyone can have.'

It is invaluable in education to teach children due breath control through sustained thought, and concentration on pure thoughts in pure words. To awaken their own instinctive awareness of the immeasurable beauties which are present in lovely and noble ideas and sounds in literature is a very rewarding occupation. 'The middle tone in pitch forms the safest starting-point for the public speaker, intensity being easily attained by a slight elevation in pitch and pressure on the voice. Deep tone should be used sparingly, though an illusion persists that a manly voice is deep, loud, and often guttural.' 'To increase and beautify your tone employ increasingly elastic, expansive, appropriate, musicalized pronouncing, and see to it that your body is relaxed – not flaccid – and your thought only employed with the subject-matter in hand.'

The ingredient for style, or to secure correct style, is strict though not slavish discipline of the emotions. 'The reader must never allow himself to be drawn away from the subject at any point, nor must he think too much of the action, nor of the atmosphere, nor of the mood he is describing, nor its effect upon the audience or himself.' A fine effect is the result of fine art. When it is a natural and spontaneous one it is very valuable: It has a lasting, almost a creative, effect. The trick-cyclist staggers only for a moment.

'A style is mature if it suggests more than it says. For once the finite fails to hint at the infinite, the reader, actor, or singer has little interest for progressive humanity. It is also true to-day that a slightly excessive tendency towards realism seems to drag language down to the level of passing needs. Thus it seems to rob it of that inscrutability which accompanies great art.'

Summarizing what to me seems a worthy objective in art are my father's words: 'To think closely and to bring our thoughts to a focus so that we are absolutely unconscious of all surroundings; to know and see mentally nothing but what we have decided to concentrate upon – that is the essence of all fine effort, in Life and Art.'

DAFFODIL-MONTH

A. V. STUART

(FOR HELEN DARBISHIRE)

And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils . . .

Daffodil-month is March,
And spring is your birth-time too;
Fitting, therefore, our gift
Of daffodils planted for you
In your study windows' view.

Wind-tossed, the daffodils dance
As they danced on that April day
When William and Dorothy paused,
Roaming their lakeside way,
And gazed at the bright array.

In her prose and his lyric lines
Lives for all time that scene,
And the blossoms, golden and gay,
Toss on the living green.
– One spring is forever green.

And so these daffodils, set
By your Lakeland windows, will tell
Year after year, as they bloom,
Of his verse, that you love so well,
And our thoughts, that follow you still.

RUTH DRAPER

SYLVIA NORTON

How shall we tell our children of your art,
The stage you peopled and the scenes you played,
And swear you starred alone in every part,
Describe the lively beings you portrayed?

The English garden you were proud to show –
Shout for the gardener, see him over there!
A blaze of colour but a week ago . . .
Herbaceous borders never were so fair.

Italian in a socialite's full day,
The 'phone, the child, the dog, distract her so
That Dante soon to Manicure gives way,
We saw the Signorina come and go.

A church in Florence – incense on the air,
Tourists who laugh and chatter on their way,
The idle and the curious, all are there –
Alone the silent woman kneels to pray.

The peasant from Dalmatia muttering fears
Waits at the New York Hospital in dread;
The railway train was wrecked, this woman hears,
That held her lover, when to doom it sped.

How shall we tell our children of your art,
The stage you peopled, *ruth* in every part?

PORTRAIT

W. H. BOORE

A skin worn thin; soft and old and sweet:
Eyes of washed light; a brow that yet
Could claim the sweeping hills its proper background;
A profile for skies; in all a face that's set
Between the fretting now and some far place
The soul, for having met it, may hope for more.
A face as frail as destiny; and as firm
As any artist's palette knife may score.
Through the bright windows of my recollection
I shall seek westwards with my closing eyes,
Towards the broad background of the sweep of hills;
Towards the eager canvas of the skies.

THE VISION OF THE VINE

JOYCE EVELEGH

Man, working with his heart and hands,
Fashions a vineyard here, and there a field:
In sunny and in cloudy lands
He sows, tends, watches, waits for yield.

And yet, when God – long centuries ago –
Planted within the world His choicest Vine,
Whereon men could their husbandry bestow,
They stretched that precious Plant in crude design
Athwart rough wood, mocked as the sap ran low;
Then trampled down the grapes, and spilled the wine;
While few a gardener's tenderness dared show,
Or to that Plant a bedding-plot assign.

And we – what of our gardening skill to-day –
How do we tend this Vine that bloomed again
To nourish man and be his Joy and Stay?
Its growth in countless lands seems all in vain;
For men wrench up Its roots, fling It aside,
Others are busy with their pruning-knife,
While some affirm in scientific pride
That such a Plant has no perennial life . . .

Hear the Vine plead: 'In Me renew thy skill,
I need thy heart and hands to nurture Me;
Learn too how thou canst graft thy human will
Upon this Stem – for thou My branch must be.'

'QUESTING TIME'S AVENUES AT WHITLEY . . .'

GORDON DAN GODFREY

I

Deckle-edged, the icing breeze soughs
through the vignette of baredark boughs,
sweeping, flinging frailcrinkling leaves down the starkhedged lane
in the direction given by no pointing windvane
faralong the path you did not take before
into man's past and into the old heart's core:
where now is the ancient fisherman and where the lake?
where now is the mirror to the path you did not take?

II

Through stygianbrambled undergrowth, darkdribbling rivulets flow
downpast the spinechill-slimy cave,
sullen with echoes, like a grave,
on over-queasy ground – through the brierspiked spinney – to mingle
with the priestblack waters of the crouching lake,
coldly cradled in the funerealfringed, firdark dingle,
its quaking, bitter eye, secret and opaque,
shadowlidded by creaking trees bearing holy mistletoe;
walk on you known and unknown stranger,
into the realm of God and danger.

III

Pause now, on this grey November afternoon,
pause now, do not prepare to depart so soon . . .
hear the aching majesty of music, swellrising,
dancing with the sunbeams' mustymoted, slantsliding:
through the silvern chalice raised highup in
Christ's blessinghand goes the molten halo, window-held, before
the mystery falls in beauty to the church's mandalic floor;
aye, so we have met again: Spirit, sun, bread and wine
(when all are re-consecrated within)
through the silent moment men have learned to call Divine.

*

EPIDAURUS

J. G. SPENCER

The cold grey stone alone survives the years,
  Hewn from the quarries of an earlier age;
Across this mighty amphitheatre
  The empty tiers survey an empty stage.

The players and the playwright – all are gone;
  The populace no longer throngs to hear
The poet's theme of laughter, or the tale
  Of ancient wrong, of pity, Fate, or fear.

But there's a theatre within the mind
  Called into being by the poet's word,
Potent to conjure up the vanished scene
  And recreate a song no longer heard.

No movement stirs the air; and yet, to-day
An audience unseen applauds an unseen play.

ALDEBARAN AND I

FRANCES BAVIN

When Aldebaran winks his eye
Under the eyebrow of the sky
Tell me, do you remember
How the jasmin flung
A snare of stars
Upon the cool verandah,
Where a flowered canopy was hung
By a blue jacaranda?

The withered hands of time have wrung
The blue from the jacaranda.
The scented snare of stars is flung
Away on the verandah.
But Aldebaran still winks his eye
Under the eyebrow of the sky,
And I still remember.

SAMSON

WILLIAM GARDENER

He never saw the city. He had been told of it,
given the cause of the press around him
that surged in the distance, and jostled him when near,
but even touching could not draw it clear,

it needed eyes for that, not news of people,
slurred sound without association of eyes;
for touch the continuous motion is the run
of a sixteen millimetre film shown

unwinding, one finger-tip's breadth to another
in stills, or slow motion, never the whole at once;
and scent carries a man to places passed;
and how shall the darkened distinguish taste?

Yet moving about the city day by day
and sleeping in it at night he had come to know
particular sounds of many corners, the knowledge
an occupation for his mind, and solace.

Being blind, he had felt his hearing much sharpened,
alert, poised as it were on a spring,
until the edge had worn so keen he knew
approach of spirit moving him what to do.

So when he heard *Five minutes to twelve is passed*
and by midday go to the meeting-place
and lean on the supports, draw each support
around you, he knew where to find it –

But being blind could not for certain know
whose was this city falling about his ears.

THE PAINTED HOUSE

THEA HUNT

Aloof it stands, and gentle,
Feminine, cool and grey;
Painted, delicate, intricate,
Its balcony leans on the day
Like lace on the swansdown breast
Of beauty softly dressed.

White-surrounded windows
Imprison the summer light;
Stubbornly, secretly closed
The front door glimmers white
In purple-shadowed recess –
A cool inviting caress.

Long ago it was fashioned
In leisurely other days;
It knew the intimate, passionate
Thoughts and perilous ways
Of lost enchanted greetings
In dark forbidden meetings.

Withdrawn it stands, and gentle,
A Quaker in its grace;
Modestly, prayerfully quiet
It fills its ordered space,
Watching in mild amaze
The new-born hurry of days.

LINES TO A PSYCHIATRIST

SASHA ORLEY

A poem is a useful thing, God wot –
Synthesis, self-expression and what not.
To verbalize one's feelings helps a lot.

Perhaps; but at my back I always hear
Shakespeare and Milton turning in their graves.
Poems are poems first to me, I fear,
And never shall be psychiatric slaves.

ODE TO THE LONDONER

(who is constantly being urged to live outside the Town)

RITA SPURR

How would you fare in the country,
Man of the London street,
With a mile to walk to the station
And nowhere handy to eat?

How would you feel in the morning
When the cock and the cow come alive
And you find when you see your alarm-clock
That it only registers five?

The streams and the trees whisper gently
All day – while folk are at work,
But the light of the moon's insufficient
To guide them through mud and through murk.

There's many an evening you're tired
And you're glad of the local 'flicks',
But the 'local' out there in the country
Means a walk – when the old bus sticks.

They may sleep with their windows open,
Not mind when the owls *hoot*,
But a sound of this kind in London –
And the taxi's removed from its route!

And remember, O dweller in London,
That your birds in Trafalgar Square
Return every night from the country
To relax from the 'planes in the air!

THE BEAUTY OF EXACT STATEMENT

KENNEDY WILLIAMSON

I bitterly resent
All mockery and being made a sport of.
It seems to make me inwardly ferment
Sort of.

In gratitude I greet
Those of my fellow-beings who will NOT sit
In the seat
Of the whatsit.

I much prefer
Those people who will let me blush unseen
And waste my sweetness – er –
Y'know what a-mean.

I hate
The brash smart-alec type of man who flings
His jests about so as to abrogate –
Well – things.

Men ask me why
Le mot should not supplant *La politesse.*
The issue's crystal-clear, and my reply
Is 'Yes'.

Long since I prophesied
That Karl Barth would be going over big.
The synthesis has existentialized
The thingmejig.

It's good
That nations now should bandy words and phrases
It's good that Egypt should – that Egypt should –
Oh, go to blazes!

Book Reviews . . .

A. E. COPPARD ON HIMSELF

STEPHEN GRAHAM

It's Me, O Lord! by A. E. Coppard (Methuen, 22s. 6d.).

This is like a companion volume to Richard Church's 'Over the Bridge'. But A. E. Coppard came from a lower level than Church, his father a poor journeyman tailor, his mother an ironing hand in a laundry, his sisters domestic servants. The boy had little schooling after the age of ten, and neither father nor mother had interest in literature. Though he lived at Brighton he took no inspiration from the sea and preferred to gaze at wind or shadow passing over a field of golden corn. He read 'penny bloods', his voice was poor, he dropped his aitches. The miracle is how he came to be the poet and short-story writer we know. For no outsider helped him. In his own words he lifted himself up by his own shoestraps. He did not even do it with the aid of prayer; for as boy and youth he had no religion whatsoever.

This book is Volume One of a long autobiography. Coppard had hoped to write the second volume, but he died while the first was in the press. It starts at 1878 and breaks off at 1922. The interest therefore is in the development from childhood rather than in the years of achievement and retrospect. There is the handsome stripling who could run a hundred yards in twelve seconds, and there is the Socratic old man broken down by time. It is the young fellow we have to see and his chief plus-quality was that he could run. So his first job was that of errand-boy and he carried trousers through the streets of Whitechapel. His second job put him in a 'pool' of messenger boys in buttons who, before the time of the telephone, dashed about London with urgent messages in the leather purses of their belts. That was at the age of twelve. Next year he was office boy to a firm of auctioneers in Brighton. From the age of sixteen to the age of nineteen he is working for 'Sunlight Soap', and there among the soap wrappers he has suddenly found his soul. He is reading Keats. He is walking the streets of Brighton reading as he goes. His pockets bulge with literature and his eyes bulge with glorious surprise.

How he came to that from 'Deadwood Dick' we do not know, and we crave to understand how the miracle came about. But writing his autobiography was an old man's hobby, and A. E. C. just pleased himself as to how much he would tell his readers. One may surmise that poetry found an echo in him or it unlocked poetry in himself. That awakened an ambition to write and his perseverance in the face of discouragement was extraordinary. It took him twenty years to break through into the world of letters. Only at the age of forty did he decide to live wholly by writing and even then, in his first year of it, only earned on an average some fifteen shillings a week. Success when it came was via the short story rather than poetry. It started from America where, as in Russia, the art of the short story is appreciated. The Book of the Month Club actually took a volume of his short stories as one of its choices.

At the time when this fascinating and tantalizing autobiography closes

Coppard is on the threshold of celebrity. He is at least recognized, and finds homes for his tales and poems in the good old *Saturday Westminster*, the *London Mercury*, the *English Review*, and similar great mediums whose demise could provide a sad comment on the decay of prospects for poets and short-story writers. A. E. Coppard was successful but he was always a poor man. That almost proves that he was good.

SILENCES BETWEEN THE LINES

F. PRATT GREEN

The Inheritors, by Richard Church (Heinemann, 10s. 6d.).
A Mortal Pitch, by Vernon Scannell (Villiers Poetry, 7s. 6d.).

A generation divides these two poets, the older having been born in 1893, the younger in 1924. This may be a wider gulf than it sounds, for poetry is said to perform a fresh somersault every decade. These two books, however, are not intolerant of each other, both poets, in fact, being well within the tradition and differing rather in tone and angle of vision than in the forms they use.

Richard Church, having outlived the facile criticism which harried the ranks of the Georgians and having enhanced his reputation by that autobiographical masterpiece *Over the Bridge*, is now honoured by us all. That he is a Georgian, a brother of W. H. Davies and Edward Thomas, is evident from a dozen poems he has not been ashamed to include in his new collection. No poet of Mr. Scannell's generation, or decade, could write of the ragwort:

> But still, in memory, a cloud
> Of meadow butterflies will hover
> Where that untidy blossom shook
> Gold-dust into the passing brook.

The pastoral note is out of fashion. Indeed there is no evidence in *A Mortal Pitch* that Vernon Scannell goes into the country at all. His is an urban world:

> And in the park's remarkable new green,
> Bright and dainty as confectioner's wares
> Girls wander where the lazy deckchairs lean
> Striped like the humbugs of a child's desire.

The Georgians were accused of escaping into the country; our youngest contemporaries prefer the Espresso Bar.

Instead of being drunk with words, the contemporary poet manages them with self-conscious skill and well-articulated wit. The change is a relief. How witty Mr. Scannell can be is brilliantly demonstrated in 'Four Dead Beats to the Bar'. Such a talent has its dangers, so that we find ourselves complaining now not of obscurity, as we used to do, but of slickness. All the same, *A Mortal Pitch* gives its own sort of pleasure and might be taken as fairly representative of the new look in poetry.

The influence of Wordsworth on Richard Church is handsomely acknowledged by him in a fine poem written to celebrate his centenary. In it he lays his finger on Wordsworth's secret, the secret of all who are his true successors:

To be with Wordsworth is to be alone,
Yet sharing solitude through fruitful silence.
It is these silences in Wordsworth's verse,
The pauses when you walk with him, the moments
Between the phrases, while he stands and frowns,
Immobile in an agony of feeling . . .
It is these silences between the lines
That held the secret of his poetry.

(Not merely of feeling, as Richard Church notes, but of thought.) What we miss in so much strictly contemporary poetry is the 'silences between the lines'. No amount of brilliant talk can quite make up for those silences. The brilliance of the talk, we suspect, arises from a fear of silence, from facing in solitude the ultimate issues of life and death.

MR. STRONG AND MR. CAUSLEY

THOMAS MOULT

The Body's Imperfection, by L. A. G. Strong (Methuen, 18s.).
Union Street, by Charles Causley (Rupert Hart-Davis, 12s. 6d.).
Best Poems of 1955 (Borestone Mountain Awards, California, 2.50 dollars).

In the Oxford days of W. B. Yeats the work of L. A. G. Strong made such a powerful appeal to him that we might be tempted to describe the author of *The Body's Imperfection* as a poet's poet. But what is more important is that his appeal is to the ordinary reader as well. It is safe to say that nowhere in this his latest volume, do we meet with the discouragement which all too often is experienced through the obscurity that is often lauded as subtlety.

A poet as simple as W. H. Davies, as I happen to know, enjoyed Mr. Strong's epigrammatic gift, and the short-story writer, O. Henry, would surely have welcomed him for his explosive final verses as a causer of surprises after his own heart. The droll opening poem, 'The Brewer's Man', in the present volume is an early masterpiece, colloquial and concise:

Have I a wife? Bedam I have!
  But we was badly mated:
I hit her a great clout one night,
  And now we're separated.

And mornin's, going to me work,
  I meets her on the quay:
'Good mornin' to ye, ma'am,' says I;
  'To hell with ye,' says she.

As his pages are turned the mellowness of a sensitive and gracious artist deepens. It is perhaps as well that he has not forced his Muse – sixteen years have passed since his previous volume of poetry – because, growing older, he has grown richer in his devotion to Nature and firmer in his appreciation of the men and women around him. Mr. Strong's interest as a novelist in the human 'imperfection' has led him into writing some of the most sympathetic and eager poetry in our time.

Dame Edith Sitwell and the late Roy Campbell have paid tribute to

Charles Causley as a poet of uncommon promise. 'One of the front-rankers', wrote Roy Campbell, and Dame Edith has given Mr. Causley's new collection an enthusiastic personal send-off by contributing a preface in which she describes the book as 'full of beauties' and refers especially to 'At the British War Cemetery, Bayeux', 'magnificent, moving, terrible.'

But Mr. Causley is not one of the gloom-and-gutter versifiers. He has avoided the now declining temporary influence of the so-called modernists by an intense allegiance to something everlasting, not just temporal – the sea and deep waters, the main source of his inspiration. *Union Street*, a title which from this point of view is deceptive, includes selections from his two earlier books, and technically as well as imaginatively he is a poet to be welcomed.

It so happens that Dame Edith Sitwell's choice of 'At the British War Cemetery, Bayeux' is also the choice of a panel of judges who for the eighth year have selected from the magazine poetry of the English-speaking world the Borestone Mountain Prize Poems. Again we have to make the criticism that of eighty-three 'Best Poems' no more than thirteen are from English periodicals and only one English author is listed on the cover. Not that this detracts from the value of the anthology: work by Robert Frost, Robert Penn Warren, Richard Wilbur, W. H. Auden and W. S. Merwin is represented. The poets on this side of the Atlantic are Dannie Abse, Louis Macneice, Elizabeth Jennings, Thomas Blackburn, Charles Causley, Barbara Cooper, John Heath-Stubbs, Robert Horan, Norman MacCaig, Hubert Nicholson and (from *The Poetry Review*) Margaret Stanley-Wrench and the present writer.

CANDLE-LIGHT AND THE MACABRE

EVELYN D. BANGAY

A Candle Ahead, by Margiad Evans (Chatto and Windus, 8s. 6d.).
Devil, Maggot and Son, by Christopher Logue (Peter Russell, 12s. 6d.).
Winter's Right and Other Poems, by Elena Fearn (Hand and Flower Press, 8s. 6d.).

There are many ways of asserting what we think and feel. Margiad Evans has chosen that of the paradox. This, combined with an intensity of emotion and a style where economy of language clarifies rather than obscures the subject matter, gives her poems great forcefulness. They are both provocative and convincing.

An obsession with the macabre, both in life and in death, seems to dominate the other three books in varying degrees. The very title of one, *Devil, Maggot and Son*, suggests the flavour of the content. This book of poems by Christopher Logue is printed in a limited edition of 250 numbered copies. The thoughts go deep, but are too private in their expression to be often shared by reviewer or reader.

Elena Fearn has told her publisher that to her 'poetry is a perpetual surprise' and that her poems come to her spontaneously after a period of conflict and uncertainty and are followed by long effort in shaping them. There is a strangeness about them that teases the reader and often fascinates him but leaves him only half satisfied.

LOVE AND RHAPSODY

HERBERT PALMER

The Journey, by John Hoffman (Guild Press, 7s. 6d.).
The Cold Flame, by Fredoon Kabraji (Fortune Press, 8s. 6d.).
The Songs of Orpheus, by John W. Most (Guild Press, 5s.).

John Hoffman is a rhapsodist, and like all rhapsodists (they include such opposites as Swinburne and Walt Whitman) he tends to lose his head or become wordy. Nevertheless *The Journey* is a moving and remarkable book of verse and parts of it have won high praise from Sir Herbert Read and Professor V. de S. Pinto. It is divided into two sections, 'The Journey' and 'The Ultimate Way,' the first an autobiographical fragment written in rhapsodical free verse with some traditional blank verse mingled into it. The second section is made up of fifty-seven short rhymed love lyrics, in which I dimly hear two conflicting voices: Landor and Donne. The theme of the whole book is Love; and Milton's indisputable recipe for the best poetry, that it should be simple, sensuous and passionate, seems to have been continually in John Hoffman's mind. While so much modern verse breathes darkness this book breathes light. At his simplest best John Hoffman writes like this:

> Oh, let us praise Love
> Unto the uttermost;
> For I am found,
> And I was lost.

Mr. Fredoon Kabraji is also a love rhapsodist, more exuberant but rather less disciplined and less spiritual than John Hoffman, who, in spite of his abandon, rarely jolts or jars. But though Mr. Fredoon Kabraji is disconcertingly uneven there is some downright attraction in him, for he seeks to give the full kernel of his impressions and emotions.

> Her love – ah! it was free as the wind,
> blowing and bold and – sometimes – tender,
> but more often fiery. Her soul was blind
> with foolish pride. No one could bend her.

Which stanza would be very good, but for the commonplace 'but more often fiery', no doubt felicitous as regards actual characterization, but cheapening and spoiling the second two lines of the stanza.

One might almost call Mr. Kabraji's volume 'Selected Poems', for part of it is from *A Minor Georgian's Swan Song*, which won him many friends and tributes in important places. Readers in search of seductive rhythms may often turn to the poems on pages 35-48. This poet often carries by his passion and sincerity – productive of melody – when he fails in art.

Songs of Orpheus, by John W. Most, in spite of its ambitious title and a preface by John Hoffman, shows too many of the faults of those first-comers who are sailing in a strong traditional current. Its classical form does not reach to its classical content. There are too many poetical clichés and threadbare epithets, to say nothing of commonplace emotional gush. But because it is a first book and the poet has vision, fluency and knowledge, it may be the forerunner of something satisfyingly good.

THE ART OF OMISSION

GEOFFREY JOHNSON

Poetry in our Time, Babette Deutsch (Columbia Univer. Press and Oxford Univer. Press, 40s. net).

Collected Poems, Edna St. Vincent Millay (Hamish Hamilton Ltd., 42s. net).

Miss Deutsch's sumptuously produced and lop-sided study, now in its second printing has been loudly praised by such poets as W. H. Auden, William Carlos Williams and Richard Eberhart. Naturally enough, for they themselves and scores like them are discussed with a solemnity of purpose and detail quite out of proportion to their poetic merits. As many poets, and some of them much better, to name only Wilfrid Gibson, Edmund Blunden and Ruth Pitter, are not so much as mentioned. This axe-grinding is as familiar as it is transparent: omit almost any living poet whose ideas happen to be comely and clothed in fit language, and the implication is that the only people who really matter in English poetry are the rag-and-bone men. Even Hardy, by far the greatest of the poets discussed, comes in for a critical analysis which is as shallow as it is patronizing.

The whole book, however, has a documentary value, though clearly not intended by its author, for it amply illustrates the one-eyed poetry criticism now fashionable here and overseas and in particular the closed ring and racket of the snootier American intellectuals. Nor is it without its comic, though unconsciously comic, moments, such as the discoveries that Eliot is a musical poet and that the metric of Marianne Moore is precise as that of a minuet.

Edna St. Vincent Millay, whose lyrics by the way had the highest praise from the supreme master, Hardy, gets a condescending mention of a line and a half, and that only in the introduction to the above book. It is perhaps true that in the twenties, when her best work was produced, the emancipation of women, then a new thing, had much to do with the wide acclaim which the piquant individualism of her verse received. But it is false, and cowardly now she is dead, to maintain, as the American pundits of the Higher Criticism and their brethren over here maintain, that her work even at its best is a pastiche of Elizabeth Browning and Christina Rossetti with a dash of Byron, and that on average it is some improvement on Ella Wheeler Wilcox or Patience Strong. Much, it is true, could have been omitted and with advantage from these 750 exquisitely printed pages, but it is sheer ignorance or arrogance to assert that her best work, such as 'The Buck in the Snow,' more than a few of her 200 sonnets, and Renascence, which made her name at nineteen, will not be loved and treasured by posterity. She is to lyric poetry what her contemporary Katherine Mansfield is to the short story; considerably more. Though like her, she sometimes poses, is thin, or precious, her flavour is original and individual. Say what the wry-mouthed gentlemen will, her lyric sweetness is just not a saccharine substitute for the genuine honey of Helicon.

'VEX NOT HIS GHOST'

DALLAS KENMARE

Lord Byron's Marriage, by Wilson Knight (Routledge, 30s.).

A recent article by the music critic of *The Times* raised the perennial question of the relation between man and artist, speaking of it as 'one of those mysteries that eternally challenge our curiosity', and wisely adding that 'psychology gropes where the artistic temperament is concerned.' It does indeed; in fact, no scientific investigation into the nature of genius will get us very far, genius belonging to quite another dimension. Until this fact is recognized, there can be little progress. In any case, the achievement of the artist is of far greater importance than his personal life. This, of course, is a view directly opposed to the contemporary fashion for biographical interpretations (usually Freudian), and biography, the more intimate the better.

It is generally conceded that Lord Byron was among the great English poets, and fairly generally known that his marriage was disastrous, and that some mystery is involved. Professor Wilson Knight's book explores a vast amount of material, representing formidable scholarly research, and provides us with a great many new suggestions which may help to elucidate the mystery. But we are not helped to understand the all-important thing, Byron's poetry, as we were in Professor Knight's earlier and altogether admirable books of interpretation, Shakespearian and otherwise, and a more comprehensive understanding of the psychology of genius, for example, the difference between psychological and physiological bi-sexuality and homo-sexuality, would reveal such complex personalities as Byron in a more pleasant, and much truer, light. As it is, the vice that, according to Mrs. Beecher Stowe, was responsible for the break-down of the marriage is virtually disproved, and another, or rather two more, vices virtually proven in its place. But does it really matter? 'Vex not his ghost.' No one can ever know the truth, and research into personal intimacies is futile as well as distasteful. What does matter about a poet is the poetry.

TRANSATLANTICS

KATHLEEN VALMAI RICHARDSON

Poems, by Elizabeth Bishop (Chatto and Windus, 8s. 6d.).
Dance Without Shoes, by William Pillin (The Golden Quill Press, $2.50).
In Defense of Earth, by Kenneth Rexroth (New Directions, $3).
In the Rose of Time, by Robert Fitzgerald (New Directions, $3).

I so delighted in and enjoyed the company of Elizabeth Bishop, the quite individual wit and brilliance of flight-control in *Poems*, that the other travellers on my list seemed pedestrian, and sometimes (shssh) sadly tedious.

The supreme virtue of Miss Bishop is that she doesn't tie any bows on her aircraft. Nowhere does the mind-flight flag or the stomach heave at a poetic pet-word. It is grown-up, this poetry, and anyone given to defensive generalizations about Modern This-That-and-the-Other should read it, because, while it is fresh and of our day, it is schooled to tradition and

shapeliness; indeed, far more so than, say, Byron's. I borrow a homely catch-phrase from the veteran judge, J. G. Wilson, and say: 'She knows y'know!' offering it as highest praise. A poet's job is to Know and to forge means of communicating that which he knows.

There are some nice poems in William Pillin's volume, original in thought and adequate in expression; there is honesty too, inherently modest, and consequently more convincing than that loud integrity which too many poets make a business rather than a profession of, as who should claim a corner in Truth.

In Defense of Earth, by Kenneth Rexroth, contains statements on most of the usual contemporary maggots, the love poems being the least mechanical reactions to Poetic Living. Most of the others are too proud of 'not being poetry' (a strange inversion indeed) yet there are some gey powerful passages, boxing strongly Whitmanesque but with a shorter punch. The translations from the Japanese say nothing very much in an extraordinarily cryptic way, but, to be fair, most English versions of Japanese non-epigrams usually do.

As Robert Fitzgerald's title suggests, his collected poems from 1935 to 1936 reveal a romantic poet with an ear for word-music and texture. Sometimes one tires a little of the so carefully chosen adjective and of the wealth of synonyms in the early poems; the rather portentous treatment of minutiae; but under the winnowing of years, a firmer and clearer idiom begins with 'A Wreath for the Sea.'

ONE CRITIC AND TWO POETS

PAUL SELVER

Verhaeren, by P. Mansell Jones (Bowes and Bowes, 7s. 6d.).
The Enemy in the Heart. Poems 1946–56, by T. H. Jones (Rupert Hart-Davies, 10s. 6d.).
The Stones of Troy, by C. A. Trypanis (Faber and Faber, 10s. 6d.).

'Verhaeren was often described as one of the most attractive figures in the Europe of his day. Why, despite all his rich gifts, has the interest in his work diminished?' Thus the blurb, which goes on to state that Mr. Jones raises and answers this question. What is his answer? As far as I can follow his argument, he comes to the point where he says: 'For reasons one could not attempt to analyse here, that portion of the intelligentsia who still read verse have turned more and more from a lyricism of direct and expansive communication to a poetry of hermetic symbolism and subjective metaphysics.'

Mr. Jones seems to favour this attitude, and although he sometimes admits that Verhaeren did not entirely lack merit, he is apt to be lukewarm about his poetry. 'At every phase,' he writes, 'the advice for reading Verhaeren is to select.' This is odd but clear. The following is also odd, but not clear: 'Since the death of Hugo, the French muse, never for long content with esoteric refinements, could count no eminent poet (except Verlaine) whom even the intelligentsia were able to read without initiation.' I am still trying to unravel this.

Mr. Jones's book is apparently intended to arouse interest in Verlaine among even French-less readers. He should therefore have at least mentioned

Jethro Bithell's 'Contemporary Belgian Poetry' which came out, deservedly with quite a bang, in 1911, and which contains translations still alive in 1957.

What Mr. Jones styles the 'poetry of hermetic symbolism' has too long shed its blight in this country, but meaning, shape and even rhyme are more and more asserting themselves in contemporary poetry. 'The Enemy in the Heart' by a Welshman and 'The Stones of Troy' by a Greek, both supply striking evidence of this. In one poem T. H. Jones displays an early foppishness of technique (he makes 'bruise' rhyme with 'carouse', 'whirl' with 'hell', etc.), but elsewhere his command of poetical form and style is beyond criticism, especially in two sonnets which, as they should, produce the impression of having crystallized into shape effortlessly. Mr. Trypanis can also write a flawless sonnet. His volume takes its title from a series of imaginative glosses on passages in the 'Iliad', and throughout he handles words with a consummate mastery.

VISION AND REVISION

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Dante and the Early Astronomers, by M. A. Orr (Wingate, 30s.).
Aristophanes' ' *The Frogs*'. An English version by Dudley Fitts (Faber & Faber, 15s.).

I am allergic to astronomy. I can gaze for hours into the heavens, wrapt in conjecture about God and the infinite unconcerned with phases and orbits. Therefore, Dante's *Divine Comedy* has always held me by its leaping vision without thought for its meticulous astronomical background. Yet I was fascinated by the contribution of Mrs. Orr, the astronomer-wife of an outstanding astronomer, to its understanding. Her study, first published in 1913 and now revised, traces the theories of space and the earth's relationship thereto from classical times to 1300, when the poet engaged on his great epic.

Mrs. Orr demonstrates that it was no uncharted fantasy, but the superimposition of vision upon all previous speculation about the stars in their courses. She details the technical precision with which Dante founded his emergence from the circles of Hell and the terraces of Purgatory and his ascension, through Space, to the Heaven of Light and Love where God dwells with his Angels and His redeemed. Explaining nothing of the perfection of the form of the poem, its terror, its love, its sublimity of language, her book nevertheless heightens uniquely our appreciation of its unparalleled grandeur of conception.

To mention 'The Frogs' of Aristophanes in the same review seems conflicting indeed, but in many ways it is complementary. Aristophanes goes on his own pilgrimage into the Shades, albeit hilariously and outrageously, to fetch back Euripides to restore Athenian drama and the State itself in its decline, but returns with Aeschylus instead, who has triumphed in poetry and wit.

Aristophanes is one of the great comic geniuses but it seems a hopeless task to convey in English and alien metres the humour, the vigour and delicacy, the razor-edge and topicality, and the underlying seriousness of his steadying challenge to decadence and destruction. Yet how well Dudley Fitts in loosely

sprung, zestful iambics has compassed that task. He has captured the delayed jokes, the comically compounded words and the unpredictable clinches by the judicious use of modern reference and vernacular. Yet with almost literal fidelity he has brought to life the rich satire, the philosophy and the fun.

SOVIET VERSE

STEPHEN GRAHAM

Russian Poetry, 1917–1955. Selected and translated, with an introduction, by Jack Lindsay (Bodley Head, 15s.).

Russia had some fine poets in what corresponds to the Victorian Age, but they are as little known here as Tennyson and Browning are known there. But since 1917 many British writers have learned Russian, and there has been a gallant attempt to translate not only the classical poetry of Russia but the wilder and more undisciplined verse of the revolution. But the effort has not been mutual and one can imagine how Khrushchef would gape at a poem by Dylan Thomas put into the Russian language. Although English poetry has been invaded by revolutionary ideas it has not made itself more easy for Russians to understand and it would be very difficult to put across the real quality of say T. S. Eliot.

But there seems to be an advantage, at least for us. We have the new forms and formlessness suitable for the reception of Soviet verse in translation and it can be said at once that most of Jack Lindsay's fine anthology reads, not like a translation, but like original English poetry. Thus from Mayakovsky:

It's time that I began
the tale of Lenin,
but not because
no suffering yet remains.
It's time because
the bitter bewildered complaints
are turned
to a mastered penetrated pain.
It's time to refashion
his words with their stormy drive.
Shall we then
pour our spirits out
in weeping?
No man is alive
as Lenin is still alive:

Lenin at the outbreak of the revolution said 'Let there be Poetry'! and Soviet literature owes much to him because most of the top men who came to power with him were non-Russian, speaking and writing jargon, men with no ear for poetry. There was of course an almost complete break with the past. The most popular poet of the pre-revolutionary period, Balmont, fled to Paris and was barely heard of again. Others changed their tune, and Blok, who had written 'Russia, thou art unusual in thy sleep', got inebriated by revolution and invited the comrades, in verse, to take pot-shots at Holy Russia. In his changed mood he wrote at least one strong poem 'The Scythians' finely translated by Lindsay:—

You are millions. But we sweep an endless flood.
You'd stem our torrents? Ah, be wise.
For we are Scythians. Asia is our blood
and crowding hungers slant our eyes.

Another forsworn writer was Byely who is represented by a poem which begins –

Sob, fiery element,
in columns of roaring light
O Russia, Russia, Russia,
let me burn in your maddening might.

Not very good in English, but no better in the original Russian. These got their rations from the regime, but were not characteristic of the young poets whom Lenin and Lunacharsky bade arise. The new poets wrote their verses on privy walls, the street-walkers of the spirit. There were many of them, mostly unrecorded, but certain voices emerged above the poetic din and Soviet verse became more civilized though retaining a tendency to vociferousness and sansculottism. We have Esenin the hooligan poet, Mayakovsky who wrote for loud declamation, sometimes in processions of slogans, Demyan Byedny, Pasternak, Tikhonov.

Jack Lindsay's selection conducts one through the various phases of Soviet poetic feeling, through the war and into the post-war period, and is valuable because it covers the whole time from the beginning of the revolution until now. One can get a broad idea of the continued excitement of words called poetry and of the poetic mood of the Soviet Union. There has not been a great deal of interference, though the Old Bolsheviks frowned on Russian melancholy and the religion of suffering, and were not keen on love. The current poetry had to help Five Year Plans and during the war period must not be defeatist. Zhdanov raised his pestilential arm against literature and suppressed among other things what has been held to be one of the finest poems of the war, 'The Siege of Leningrad' by Anna Akhmatova.

But nevertheless, despite strictures, the harvest of verse is remarkable. One might call attention to the hospital poem by Lukonin, to the 'Song of the Cossack Girl' by Selvinsky, and to 'The Rainbow' by the dramatist Simenov. 'Even in Siberia people live', exclaimed a character in Chekhov. And under Communism there must be poetry.

A WORLD OF CONTRASTS

ALICE R. KENDALL

Bundu: A Book of Verse from Rhodesia, by Noëline Barry, illustrated by Jill Meikle. With a preface by Thomas Moult (Ditchling Press).

Sunshine – yellow jacket, and a luxuriant green plant outside, anticipate the colour and mood of this little volume. At once we are transported into another world where images and experiences, so different from our own, have inspired the poet. A world of contrasts; of hard grey rock, of earth parched under the staring sun, or swollen by heavy rains.

For those of us who know South Africa, Mrs. Barry's work will surely awaken many memories. And for those at home, who have not shared the

actuality, a page of the atlas will magically flutter into life. We shall stand beside her under the acacia tree to watch the dancers; hear throbbing drums, and the lazy talk of old Sixpence, the garden 'boy'; sculpt granite will glow red in the sunset behind native workers bent close to the soil . . . Soil which –

> . . . shows a cracked and gaping mouth,
> And wantonly the red dust-devils swirl.
> Cloud-shadow bruises mark the burning hills,
> And heat-haze hangs as heavy as a pall.

As Thomas Moult comments in his preface: 'Every page . . . reveals a love of country and the simple native folk whose labours and dreams are so fascinating to her and so mysterious.'

The choice of vocabulary, often as stark as her settings, heightens their description better than any more elaborate style. And this natural restraint covers a sincerity, a depth of wisdom, most movingly conveyed in the final poem 'Native Path':

> Each day I watch the natives pass
> Along this narrow track.
> What do they plan?
> What do they dream?
> And what will they bring back?

Yet when the picture demands it she can burst into exuberant metaphor, as in 'Rainy Tropic Night', where 'exotic moths embroider walls . . .' or in 'Wings of Stone', in which the poet's pen translates grey boulders into an angel's form.

Jill Meikle's nine black-and-white illustrations follow the writer with a matching simplicity.

BRIEF'S THE WORD

NOTES BY THE EDITORIAL BOARD

(The inclusion of a new work in these notes does not preclude a subsequent review.)

Brief, indeed, must be the operative word for this review-section. *Pegasus and Other Poems* by C. Day Lewis (Jonathan Cape) and *Poems 1943-1956* by Richard Wilbur (Faber and Faber, 15s.) – these volumes, published too late for the present issue, will be reviewed in the next one. *Reason and Energy*, by Michael Hamburger – studies in German literature (Routledge, 30s.), *Baudelaire, a Self Portrait*, by L. B. Hyslop and F. E. Hyslop, jnr. (Oxford University Press, 25s.), *Toward the Sun*, by Charles Plumb (Parry Jackman, 10s. 6d.) and *Collected Poems*, by Francis Carey Slater (Blackwood, 12s. 6d.) are also held over, the two last-named for more than one reason: Roy Campbell contributed a preface to each of them just before his death.

Vernon Scannell's second collection, *A Mortal Pitch* (Villiers Publications, 7s. 6d.), is another to be reviewed later . . . 'He lived for poetry,' writes Lionel Butler of E. H. W. Meyerstein in the Chatterton Lecture for 1955, which has been printed for the British Academy (Oxford University Press, 3s. 6d.). Meyerstein's fellow-members of The Poetry Society will welcome these personal reminiscences. *Changing Views of the Mind in English Poetry* is the title of the Warton Lecture for the same year, by Geoffrey Bullough, and with *The Noble Moor* Helen Gardner gave the 1955 Shakespeare Lecture. Each of these comes from the same publishers (O.U.P.) at the same price.

Several of the *Collected Poems* by Conrad M. R. Bonacina appeared in *The Poetry Review*, and are now reprinted in an attractively neat volume, the first to be issued by the Trouvere Press (7s. 6d.). Mr. Bonacina follows well-trodden paths with skill and sincerity. So do four poets sponsored with distinction at York by the Guild Press – *Morning Glory*, by Catherine Blakiston, with an introduction by Lady Margaret Sackville, *The Earth So Fair*: by Pauline Gibson, *Dragon's Teeth*, by Jack Bevan, and *These are your Flowers*, by Doris Mallory (3s. 6d. each). Readers of our quarterly will be acquainted with the verse of Frederick Bratton, and they will find much to appreciate in *The Silver Birch* (Fantasma, Worthing, 2s.). *On a Chartless Sea,* by Earl L. Bradsher, is a P. R. Macmillan publication (Cambridge, 15s.) issued 'in the belief that it is destined to become a classic of modern American literature.'

The poetry of *Dante Gabriel Rossetti* has been edited by Oswald Doughty and republished by Dent (18s.) – a beautifully produced book by a poet who, we are told, has influenced W. B. Yeats and T. S. Eliot. The sixteenth-century Earl of Surrey's songs and sonnets, *To a Lady*, are edited by Douglas Geary (Forbes Robertson, 8s. 6d.), and *The York Cycle of Mystery Plays* are republished by the S.P.C.K. (28s.) under the supervision and editorship of J. S. Purvis. Splendid editions, these, and in no instance unworthy of the enshrined greatness.

Ena Wright's *These I have loved* (Mitre Press, 6s.) is as friendly and generous as its title. The friendly and generous St. Francis has been the life-long inspiration of Fr. Lucius McLean, and *The Inn*, emphasizes this in devout songs (Assisi Press, Dublin, 5s.). Mrs. M. E. Millen is an old favourite of ours: *Penfeathers* is an admirable volume in its simplicity. Maurice Swabey is ambitious: he seeks an entry into the mind of a great music-maker – and finds it without too much tribulation (*Beethoven,* Poetry Publications, 12s. 6d.). Publisher Stockwell's two new issues are *The Eye,* by Robert Bryans (6s.), and *In Confidence,* by Frederic Charteris (4s. 6d.). *Poems*, by Arthur M. Stokes (Westerham Press), *By Cherwell Side,* by Lila Gough (Abbey Press, 3s. 6d.), and *Why and Whither?* by Adelaide H. Thierry (Chapman and Grimes, Boston, 2.50 dollars) are here to remind us that brave banners are still flying.

Finally, a brief note about the latest Outpost publications, from a press at Dulwich Village which has won a splendid reputation for artistic dignity and enterprise. Peter Helm (*The Inner Surface*), Dorothy Stringer (*Make Me a Mandrake*), and W. H. Petty (*No Bold Comfort*) are admirable as examples. Again we have to complain that this firm's booklets are unpriced. A good work is worthy of its hire.

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GREAT DAY – OUR REUNION AT LUNCH

On this, the fourth anniversary of a happy occasion, the general verdict was 'outdoors not quite so fine as usual, but better than ever indoors'; but if you had asked any of the guests afterwards what they had for lunch, they'd probably have answered, dreamily, 'Fay Compton, Celia Randall, Bryan Guinness, Eamonn Andrews, L. A. G. Strong, Louis Golding, John Graddon, Rosamund Greenwood, Geoffrey Tankard, and of course, The President . . .' Any idea that Our Luncheons have anything to do with some mundane midday snack is too absurd; we expect – and get – more. Beauty, grace and

wit we have come to take for granted as our fare, and a glance at the menu above will show a spicing of Irish quality in all three. No wonder an almost continuous ripple of laughter proved that poets, contrary to popular superstition, do not thrive on gloom.

Before introducing the guests of honour, The President, Thomas Moult, spoke of a sick world where poetry is more than ever needed and of an increasing awareness of its therapeutic value shown by the ever-mounting numbers of young verse-speaking aspirants – 14,000 this year – for the Society's awards. He paid high tribute to the devoted team of adjudicators who travel all over the country inspecting and encouraging this army with its incalculable influence for future good. And before the speeches began, Fay Compton rose to lend her lovely art to that poem from *The Poetry Review* which has brought the heaviest mail of the year: 'The Resurrection of the Horses', by Celia Randall.

The toast of The Poetry Society was proposed by L. A. G. Strong with a brief survey of the complete change of climate, from the now distant *Stormy* to the long-established *Set Fair*, which owes not only its source but its maintenance to our President's personal devotion and example. In reply Lord Moyne spoke of that state of *baraka* or blessedness which dwells with such a climate and which can most nearly be expressed in poetry.

The Other Arts were saluted by John Graddon in a *jeu d'esprit* during the flight of which he 'deplored' the mastery of that wizard of the little screen, Eamonn Andrews, because of its devastating effect upon his own family circle. He added an apt quotation indicating the equal power of the charms of Miss Compton upon himself.

Louis Golding, representing quite a number of The Other Arts, shrugged off his eminence as novelist and poet, and described some shattering experiences in minor roles as pianist and actor in School Shakespeare which reduced his audience to tears of joy. Geoffrey Tankard also had some good stories of his own musical experiences, perhaps rather more professional, while Rosamund Greenwood, in an engagingly modest reply, struck a sincere and serious note.

That very special feature of our gathering, Kennedy Williamson's rhymed toast to Our Guests, did not disappoint his fans in either meat or sweet, nor in the adroit desserts, concocted in a matter of seconds, he served out to the previous speakers. And Eamonn Andrews, when he rose to reply, capped him with as neat a couplet as his own. Mr. Andrews, wittily recalling early associations with the Irish theatre; his first somewhat awkward encounter with the great C. B. Fry; and many other delights, captured even the sternest telephobe by being effortlessly himself: quite a feat for a TV personality – but then, the Achilles heel of the average T.V.P. is not usually Poetry, as Mr. Andrews claimed his to be. Here we may disagree, for his last few words proved Poetry to reside not in the heel but in the heart.

Yes, it was a great day for the Irish, and for Mrs. Adamson, and all of us.

K.V.R.

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Stuart Holroyd and Alun Llewellyn, late members of the General Council of The Poetry Society and contributors to *The Poetry Review*, have our congratulations on the publication of, respectively, 'Emergence from Chaos' (Gollancz, 18s) – Holroyd's first – and 'The Tyrant from Below' (Macdonald and Evans, 21s.).

'OUR GUESTS'

KENNEDY WILLIAMSON

(Speech delivered in proposing the Toast at the Poetry Society's Luncheon, 1957)

Most honoured President, dear Mr. Moult,
Lest you should hurl a Jovian thunderbolt
At my devoted head, I meekly rise,
Obeying your behest to eulogize
And greet our friends who are our Guests to-day,
And who bring summer to our arctic May.
It would have been most fitting to regale
Our Guests with roast or devilled nightingale.
That would have been no doubt the proper fare
In such proximity to Berkeley Square.
You have, however, quelled your appetities
With food to stimulate the phagocytes.
I hope you're feeling pleasantly replete,
The inner man given a special treat.
As Tennyson was once inspired to say,
Indeed our little systems have their day.

PAUL SELVER of the mordant wit, how right
You are to let your sharp-toothed satire bite,
And suff'ring fools ungladly, scarify
A world whose values have gone all awry;
And H. S. MACKINTOSH, we need your aid
To flail Society's harlequinade.
How I delight in your ballade-refrain
'Lord Balderdash, you give us all a pain.'

With warmth and friendliness we greet no less
LORD MOYNE who is withal Bryan Guinness.
A paradox is crystalized in you,
A peer and yet in some ways peerless too.

For GEOFFREY TANKARD, fill the flowing bowl,
Who to his honour plays a triple role:
Patron of poetry, a famed musician,
And, instrumentally, a skilled technician.

No speech, I think could ever be too long
When wit is robust and the speaker STRONG.
No utterance of his would seem to drag
In final dalliance or initial LAG.

Miss COMPTON, what a feat thus to contrive
To be a legend while you're still alive!
O Fay, what finished artistry is yours!
O Fay, what rapt enchantment, what allures!
O Fay, to make our sombre London gay
With all the arts so perfectly *au fait!*

From Doomington and from Magnolia Street
Comes one whom we are privileged to greet
With all the old regard, for still upholding
The banner of his art is LOUIS GOLDING.

Miss GREENWOOD, Broadway and our own West End
Have seen your work, and we to-day extend
Good wishes and our hope that we shall see
Yet more successes in the days to be.
Wrote Tennyson with his prophetic flair:
'I am that ROSAMUND whom men call fair.'

My masseur in the Turkish Bath one day
Idly remarked, when thumping his wet clay,
'I like that ANDREWS bloke; he's so unstarchy.
You know the geezer. What d'ye call him? Archie!'
Not risking, I presume, a sharp rebuff,
Our Guest has made his peace with Mr. Brough.
He talks and eats, can cope with alcohol.
Astounding he should only be a doll!

(*At this point a friend of Mr. Williamson's intervened and discreetly whispered to him that the Guest was not Archie Andrews but Eamonn Andrews*).

Oh my! I've dropped a clanger! Dear, Oh Dear!
It is another Andrews who is here!
I'm frightfully sorry. What a gaffe to make!
Do please forgive me for this gross mistake.
You see, I'm just an amateur, a layman –
Getting an Archie mixed up with an EAMONN!
Well, obviously, I've been most remiss,
But, as he well knows, 'Ignorance is Bliss.'
Features like 'What's My Line' and 'Picture Page'
Are colours in the pattern of our age.
You do not 'Know Your Partner'? Then if you
Scan the 'Shop Window' you may get a clue.
A tribute then to Eamonn Andrews. I
Await with anxious interest his reply.

I really must conclude this trivial rhyme.
'The clock upbraids me with the waste of time.'
I mustn't be a bore, or else, by heck,
You'll sling an albatross about my neck –
Reductio to something quite absurd,

A most unpleasant way to get the bird.
The sheets I've spoilt in getting up this Toast
Would equal Shakespeare's 'ruin'd quires' almost.
Will those Society members who can stand,
Now totter to their feet, and glass in hand,
Prepare to drink a Toast including, please,
All Guests, not just these wretched VIP'S?
So now this is the last of my requests:
Please do full honour to this Toast, 'Our Guests'.

*

PORTMAN SQUARE – FRIDAY'S BRIGHT LIGHTS

To continue from our last number ... Christopher Marlowe and his work were represented by some excellent reading in mid-February, and Dorothy Casey, Frances Loveridge and George Wood proved indeed that there is, as the title went, 'Nothing so Sweet as Magic.' The following Friday Natalie Moya and Gerek Schjelderup gave a brilliant recital of Indian poetry, and they completed their programme with a beautiful reading from John Redwood Anderson, who was in the Chair. Vivian Burbury presided on the evening when Eileen Thorndike and Sybil Ewbank gave, with professional skill, some well chosen scenes from modern plays, and just as admirable in their expertness were Rosamund Greenwood, Joan Hart, and John Glen with a programme rather subtly entitled 'Two Emilys, Two Charlottes.'

In March Jack Lindsay returned to give us another of his delightful lectures. As before, the time passed all too quickly! The poems illustrating his talk were read by Mary Giles, Robert Bridger and Bruce Montague. 'Our own poets' were welcome visitors the following week, and they were ably assisted by Mrs. Adamson who took the Chair. At the end of March we had one of the great favourites at Portman Square – Miss Margaret Rawlings. She introduced us to several new poems, and although some of them were longer than usual, the audience was always enraptured.

Robert Armstrong gave us food for thought in his talk 'What is happening to-day in Poetry?' Romayne Forsyth and Michael Howley read the poems for him as beautifully as they always do. Just before Easter Mr. J. G. Wilson visited us again. He has so many anecdotes to relate and we never tire of hearing them. We were interested to hear on this occasion, that George Bernard Shaw was a very kind and amiable man. May Mr. Wilson visit us again very soon, and tell us about more of his delightful experiences.

Michael Howley was again a reader during the programme presented by Dr. Marie Stopes, whose return was welcomed by a large and appreciative audience which included Lady Keeble, affectionately remembered as Lillah McCarthy. Dr. Marie Stopes gave an impressive talk about and reading of the poems of the late Lt. Raoul Pugh, R.M., whom she declared, with a characteristic challenge, 'The Greatest Poet of the Last War.' And for many in the audience she proved her claim.

The previous week's Poetry Hour was devoted to a Memorial Reading of the work of our old friend, A. E. Coppard. It was a moving occasion and the President, Thomas Moult, L. A. G. Strong and Louis Golding, all of whom were old friends of 'Alf,' contributed to it in their own individual ways. Mr. Strong read one of Coppard's stories, and a selection of his poems were read by Miss Thorndike and June Franklin who had been greatly admired by the poet himself when he gave a Reading of his own work, an experience which, alas, can never be repeated.

M.G.

COMPETITIONS FOR EVERYBODY – READERS AS WELL AS POETS

I – *Treasure Hunt continued . . .*

ALICE HUNT BARTLETT COMPETITION
ONE HUNDRED POUNDS IN PRIZES

The Poetry Society has pleasure in presenting the second instalment of our new *Competition for Poets, Non-Poets, and Readers of Poetry.* We offer – a second record figure –

ONE HUNDRED POUNDS IN PRIZES

No prize will exceed FIFTY POUNDS, and none will be less than TEN POUNDS. The qualities required to win are simple: a love of Poetry, a little Imagination, and a Good Memory. Competitors need never have written a line of verse in their lives!

But the would-be winner will be well-advised to join The Poetry Society, because the Competition will continue for several issues, and a set of coupons clipped from each of the numbers of *The Poetry Review* in which an instalment appears, must accompany the entry at the conclusion of the Contest. Membership of The Poetry Society ensures that *The Poetry Review* or *The Voice of Youth*, our associate quarterly – is received free each quarter. For details see the pages at the end of this number, where a coupon will also be found.

This is a unique Competition: a sequence compiled by 'Palgrave Q. Dobree' entirely of HIDDEN VERSES FROM KNOWN POEMS. All verses are authentic quotations, mostly taken from the middle or near-middle of poems, but several inclusions are taken from poems so short that they may belong to a poem's opening or its close. At least one quotation, indeed, is itself a complete poem. This is intended to make the search rather less arduous for some of our readers. Will competitors please take heed of this additional note, and also remember our hint that 'Palgrave Q. Dobree' took a few verses from isolated places and did not wholly refrain from 'jests'?

For the guidance of entrants here is an example of the method: the opening lines (in the last issue) are to be found in 'Go, My Flock,' the ninth song in 'Astrophel and Stella,' by Sir Philip Sidney (1554–86).

We invite readers everywhere to trace the source of as many verses as possible. The winners will be those who give the largest correct number of sources. But the winners of the recent 'Last Lines' Contest – i.e., all who shared in the prize money – are not eligible for this new Competition. A second chance is thus offered to those who narrowly or hopelessly missed an award.

The Competition will extend over several issues. Competitors must retain their lists of sources until the serialization is concluded. Instructions for submitting them will then be published, and, as the Competition is world-wide, ample time allowed for the mailing of entries. Meanwhile, make a note of each source along with the number. Each hidden verse is numbered alongside. The second instalment now follows.

HIDDEN VERSES

II

LIFE AND DEATH (*continued*)

33. At seventeen years many their fortunes seek:
But at fourscore it is too late a week:
Yet fortune cannot recompense me better
Than to die well and not my master's debtor.

34. Methought I saw a thousand fearful wrecks,
Ten thousand men that fishes gnaw'd upon;
Wedges of gold, great anchors, heaps of pearl,
Inestimable stones, unvalued jewels,
All scattered in the bottom of the sea.

35. When I am dead I hope it may be said
'His sins were scarlet, but his books were read.'

36. I will not sing my little puny songs.
It is more blessed for the rippling pool
To be absorbed in the great ocean-wave.
I will lie still
And let the multitudinous music of the Greek
Pass into me, till I am musical.

37. No' bein' fit to write in Greek
I wrote in Lallan
Dear to my heart as the peat reek,
Auld as Tantallon.

38. Roses are in September yet more sweet
Than in the lavish loveliness of June,
Loved guests that are about to go away
When we would have them linger.

39. How lonely we shall be! What shall we do –
You without me, I without you?
I cannot bear the thought you, first, may die;
Nor of how you will weep, should I.

40. Over the meadows that blossom and wither
Rings but the note of a sea-bird's song:
Only the sun and the rain come hither
All year long.

41. As long as skies are blue and fields are green,
Evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,
Month follow month with woe, and year make year to sorrow.

YOUTH AND AGE

42. But where is now the courtly troop
That once rode laughing by?
I miss the curls of Canteloupe,
The laugh of Lady Di:
They all could laugh from night to morn
And Time has laugh'd them all to scorn.

ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

When Hebe *was diſplaced by* Ganymede
To Earth ſhe ſtraight repair'd with frantick Speed,
Whither arriving, ſhe was much ſurpriſed
To find that daedal Mortals had deviſed
For their Refreſhment, an Elyſian *Brew*
Surpaſſing far the Nectar that ſhe knew.
So Skyward the celeſtial Bar-maid ſoar'd
Where Gods and Goddeſſes with one Accord,
Who taſted of this Lickour's Strength and Flavour,
Received her back into her wonted Favour.
With Chaunts of Praiſe and Thanks Olympus *rings*
For all the Health and Vigour GUINNESS brings.

G E. 1940 D

43. O Canteloupe! that such a name as thine,
Thou bugle among names should be abased
To that which whets the Vandal's morning taste
Who filched Yquem and Beaujolais for wine,
Barsac and Frontignac . . .
44. Ripe as the melting cluster!
No lily has such lustre
Yet hard to tame as raging flame
And fierce as storms that bluster!
45. O thou art fairer than the evening air
Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.
46. Fair as a star when only one
Is shining in the sky.
47. And thou art full of whispers and of shadows . . .
Thy voice is like to music heard ere birth,
Some spirit lute touched on a spirit sea.
48. And when with envy Time transported
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.
49. She that has that, is clad in complete steel,
And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds.
50. Then finish, dear Chloe, this pastoral war;
And let us like Horace and Lydia agree;
For thou art a girl as much brighter than her,
As he was a poet sublimer than me.
51. As Tom came home from Labour
Or Chris to milking rose;
Then merrily went their Tabor
And nimbly went their Toes.
52. She only smiled and she never spoke,
She smiled and went away;
But when she'd gone my heart was broke
And my wits was clean astray.
53. Here may we sit and view their toil
That travail in the deep,
And joy the day in mirth the while,
And spend the night in sleep.
54. Forty Viziers saw I go
Up to the Seraglio,
Burning, each and every man,
For the fair Circassian.
55. Yours is the beauty of the moon,
The wisdom of the sea,
Since first you tasted, sweet and soon,
Of God's forbidden tree.

The Oxford Book of French Verse

XIIITH CENTURY – XXTH CENTURY

Chosen by St. John Lucas

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56. There as she stood in wonder,
And smacked the flavour fruity,
She scanned it o'er and under
And marvelled at its beauty.

57. Och, never fear, my jewel! I'd forget ye now this minute,
If I only had a notion o' the way I should begin it:
But first an' last it isn't known the heap o' throuble's in it.

58. The alchemy of young delight.
Turns everything to gold.

59. The crimson dawn bids hence the night,
Unvail those beauteous eyes, my fair;
For till the morn of love is there,
I feel no day, I own no light.

60. Dewdrops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve
When we are old.

61. For young men it's a method of expression that they've earned,
For maidens it's a compliment that has to be returned;
Did nothing of the kind occur? . . . As far as you're concerned,
Not one!

(*To be continued*)

II – *A Famous Annual*

THE GREENWOOD COMPETITION FOR 1956–7

The Poetry Society is empowered by the executors of the late Mrs. Julia Wickham Greenwood to offer the sum of

TWENTY POUNDS

as the Shirley Carter Greenwood Prize for the best single poem in open competition.

Entries should be addressed 'The Greenwood Prize', 33 Portman Square, London, W.1. Only one poem may be submitted by any one competitor, the length not to exceed 250 lines; no previously published poem may be entered. The full name and address of the author must be given and a stamped addressed envelope enclosed if return of the poem is desired. **Also a Coupon must be attached, clipped from the end page of this issue.** If a nom-de-plume is adopted, name and address of sender must be given in a closed envelope bearing the pseudonym. The winning poem will be printed in *The Poetry Review* and may be reprinted at the discretion of the Editorial Board, who may also reserve near winners for publication in *The Poetry Review*. Closing date is 31st August, 1957.

III – *Members and Subscribers only*

THE PREMIUM COMPETITION

The above competition continues as before with the

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which may be won outright by a single competitor or may be divided at the discretion of the Premium Adjudicator. An entrance fee of 2s. 6d. will be charged, and a stamped

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addressed envelope should be enclosed if a receipt is desired. Competitors must observe the following rules:

1. One poem only may be entered by each competitor.
2. The poem must be typed and no stamped addressed envelope will be required unless a receipt is desired (See Rule 3).
3. Competitors must retain copies of their poems, as none can be returned.
4. Entries must be addressed 'Premium Competition', *The Poetry Review*, 33 Portman Square, W.1.
5. Each poem must bear the author's name and address.
6. Entrants must be members of the Poetry Society or regular subscribers to *The Poetry Review*.
7. The winner of a full Premium or one who has shared the prize money will not be eligible for re-entry for twelve months.
8. No previously published poem may be entered.

The closing date for the next Premium Competition will be 1st September, 1957.

IV – *An Old Favourite*

ORIOLE PRIZE, 1957

ORIOLE (a Poets' Group of The Poetry Society) offers an award of

FIVE POUNDS

for the best poem on a subject – Exploration. The Competition is open to all; entrance fee 2s. 6d. per entry. Competitors must adopt a pseudonym which should appear in block capitals on the manuscript, and in a sealed envelope containing the entrant's name and address. The entry not to exceed 32 lines.

Poems will not be returned. The winning poem may be published in *The Poetry Review*. Closing date, 31st July, 1957. Address: Oriole Prize, The Poetry Society, 33 Portman Square, London, W.1.

V – *A New Award*

Prizes for a Sonnet Competition will be announced in our next number. This follows our famous Competitions for Prizes by Lord Alfred Douglas and Howard Parsons.

*

POEMS ABOUT MUSIC – THE GEOFFREY TANKARD CONTEST

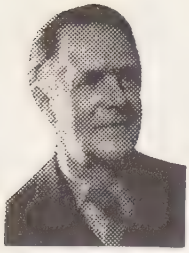
MARY GILES

An exceptionally large number entered for this competition, and as was to be expected the competitors had varied ideas about how to treat the subject. Some wrote about their reactions to music as a whole; others concentrated on images and thoughts conjured up by a particular piece of music, and there were some who wrote about anything which came to mind at the mention of the word 'Music' rather as though it were a psychology test! I am bound to say that I favoured the poems in the first two categories.

While reading some of the poems I was struck by the feeling that the writers had been carried away by the sound of words so that the original thought had been lost in the search for bigger and better words. The result was a lack of sincerity and spontaneity. It is to be hoped that these will put away their dictionaries and just be themselves in future entries!

In case it has sounded as though the entries were bad, let me hasten to add how much I enjoyed reading all of them. I was a little sorry not to find any poems about some of my own favourite pieces of music. Maybe it was just as well because I might have been biased too heavily for or against them!

There are one or two poems which I should like to mention, although I was not



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RUPERT HART-DAVIS

able to award them a prize. I was delighted by Beryl Stamp's 'Beethoven's Symphony No. 6'. Unfortunately there was too much repetition for it to qualify for an award. 'The Song of Songs' by Pamela Melnikoff, 'Music' by Beryl Kaye, 'Quartet' by Arnold Wilson, 'Nature's Symphonies' by Beryl Cooper, 'The Magic Key' by Richard Cholmeley-Jones, 'I am Music' by Eve Stannitz, 'To a Piano' by M. B. McGrath, and 'Water Music' by Rita Spurr, were all poems of commendable merit.

It was difficult to make a decision, but I have awarded the first prize to Pamela Stephenson for a poem entitled 'Music'. I found this poem simple but moving. The second prize I have given to John Redwood-Anderson for 'After Listening to J. S. Bach'. This poem was a very close second, but it did not move me quite as much. I found 'archetypal' rather a hard-sounding word in the first line, and similarly 'unhuman' in the penultimate one. These, however, are personal rather than technical criticisms.

Finally, the third prize I have divided between 'Largo' by Maude Ludington Cain, and Brahms' 'Rhapsody in G Minor' by Violet Atkinson. One of the prize poems will be included in a later issue.

PREMIUM COMPETITION REPORT No. 31

F. PRATT GREEN

This was an interesting competition to adjudicate, so varied in subject and style were the poems submitted, with few that did not merit at least a third reading. Several competitors, notably B. C. Timmins, effectively handled a large canvas; others, notably Phillippa Berlyn of Southern Rhodesia, proved how much can be done with a small canvas. W. G. Graham achieved the difficult feat of being light-heartedly didactic.

I particularly liked poems by Carla Lanyon Lanyon, J. Phoenice, and P. M. Nichol, but finally decided to award the prize to Anne Patterson, of Albury Heath, Surrey, whose skilful sonnet on a familiar theme had a pleasing freshness, with Gwendoline C. Benthall, as a close runner-up, her excellent sonnet being spoilt for me by a blackbird, that cliché among birds.

ICARUS

ANNE PATTERSON

Daedulus fashioned wings to set you free,
They were his masterpiece, his craftsman's pride;
Perhaps you watched beside him, eager-eyed,
Proud of his skill, but not more proud than he
Riding the winds with you to Italy,
O Icarus the gallant, who defied
Apollo, met his golden gaze, and died
As meteors die, plunging towards the sea.

Vicariously I dread those wastes of air,
The giddy heights that my dream parallel:
But envy springs unbidden – I would dare
The skies with you on desperate wings, rebel
Against a god, and die your death, to share
That golden, earth-free moment ere you fell.

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ORIOLE PRIZE 1955

WILLIAM KEAN SEYMOUR

This Competition was for the best Mystical Poem, and a word of regret should be said at the outset that, owing to Dr. Leigh Henry's serious illness and to other circumstances, the entries did not reach me for adjudication until the end of February, 1957, long after the closing date. Competitors have exceeded even the customary patience expected of poets.

Mystical poems are among the most difficult to write, but that did not deter more than a hundred competitors from submitting five entries. I considered each poem in what was a strictly pseudonymous competition three times, i.e., in three separate readings of all the entries. This winnowed the number of possible claims to fifty; and then, by successive stages of appraisal and judgement – which took note of inspiration, thought, expression and verse-technique – I arrived at twenty poems from which to choose the winner of the coveted Award. I emphasize this procedure to assure competitors that, as always in these competitions, close scrutiny was given to their work.

The mystical conception most favoured was that deriving from the Christian ideal and practice, though here and there Greek mythology and Indian mysticism found echoes; and there was one reference to Fatima, the daughter of Mahomet. The mystical aspects of Nature and human relationships also provided inspiration or subject matter. Bearing in mind the obvious temptation offered to explore regions of esoteric thought and occult experience and conjecture, I was agreeably surprised at the comparative absence of woolly thought and pietistic expressions; but there were of course numerous entries plentifully sprinkled with capital letters and vaguely hymnic or Scriptural phrases.

I hesitated long over half a dozen poems of great merit, but at the last five emerged for the final choice, and of these I have no hesitation in naming for a division of the Award in two equal prizes of £2 10s. each: to to G. D. Godfrey, Wolverhampton – 'Guy Donovan' – for 'Questing Time's Avenues at Whitley . . . ' and Joyce Evelegh, Elham, Kent – 'Pegasus' – for 'The Vision of the Vine'. The former uses most successfully Hopkins-like compound words and phrases in intricate sprung rhythm to convey a fused mystery of nature's appearances and Christian worship. A minor criticism is that 'holy' is not the adjective to apply to mistletoe; and I would like to know something more about the word 'mandalic'. 'The Vision of the Vine' combined imagination with clear statement of profound thought expressed in homely imagery. Readers will notice how sure is this poet's handling of rhyme and rhythm.

As runners-up I select: 1, 'Novitiate' by Juanita Peirse, London – 'Nuthatch';

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MENDIP No. THREE

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GREENWOOD COMPETITION

COUPON

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2, 'Trees' by Hilary Glyn, Alton, Hampshire – 'March'; 3, 'The Moment' by Doris M. Major, London – 'Mary Dark'. All are poems of distinction and will, I trust, be printed later in *The Poetry Review*. Specially Commended are the entries by 'Portavo', 'Orion', 'Elizabeth Manners', 'Sherwood', 'Benton Hales', 'Falcon', 'Candlelight', 'Merikare' and 'Kerith'. Also commended are 'Kestrel', 'Breeta', 'Medici', 'Jane Gayne', 'Pearl' and 'Plotinus' (for 'Blind Mole', one of two entries).

For the winning poems, see page 156.

DOUBLE-U AND DOUBLE-U

CENTRE TRIBUTE TO WALTON AND WEYBRIDGE

BY THE EDITORIAL STAFF

From the brief amount of space we can spare for our latest reports by the Centres the steady and valuable work at Walton and Weybridge – W and W – must not be omitted. We might describe the members there as being on tip-toe, an example of their vital interest in the progress of poetry occurring when the news of Roy Campbell's fatal accident came through; within a few weeks a programme of Campbell's work was given, with Kenneth Lillington as lecturer. Mr. Lillington had known the dead poet personally.

Earlier in the spring Mrs. Jean Palmer, of Oxshott, spoke about Chinese poetry and painting, exhibiting some beautifully-wrought mandarin coats and books. Mrs. Palmer emphasized that poetry is in the painting, every detail of a picture representing a symbol. 'She was a picturesque figure herself in a black and white Chinese gown,' writes the hon. secretary. She had previously lectured to the Centre on the work of Edith Sitwell.

The hon. secretary of this Surrey Group is also the founder, Mrs. Elsie M. Gittens, and a presentation was made to her during the evening. It was a strangely beautiful painting of a Madonna by 'an artist who is rising to unusual fame.' He had stayed in Weybridge some years ago. John Gittens was chairman, and he also presided when, in April, Peter Dale of Addlestone read his own verses, showing great promise. Kenneth Lillington lectured the following month, and Mrs. Bullock, another American visitor to the Centre, in June.

The monthly gatherings (third Thursday at 8) take place again at 28 Oatlands Drive, and enquiries are welcomed there by Mrs. Gittens.

Before our space is used up, there is just room for an expression of regret that Mr. Bernard Easton, of St. Margaret's, has died. His sister, Mrs. Brice, to whom we offer our sympathy, writes from Horsham: 'It was a great happiness to him to belong to The Poetry Society.'

Note – For Directory of Centres see previous issues.

CAN WE HELP YOU?

The answer is Yes to anyone who is anxious for the best advice about his or her work. The Poetry Society established a CRITICAL SERVICE some years ago, and writers are invited to make use of it.

Members may submit two poems for criticism and help, for a minimum fee of 5s. The charge for the criticism of each additional poem (under 100 lines) is 2s.

It has now been decided to extend the service to non-Members, but at a different rate of 5s. for each poem submitted. It is particularly requested that all poems submitted should be typed and that a stamped addressed envelope be enclosed.